In Memory of

Coleman Tileston Clark

and

Salter Storrs Clark, Jr.

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Soldier Letters

Coleman Tileston Clark

5th Battery: 2nd Group: 28th Regiment:
Field Artillery: French Army
Killed in action, Juvigny (Soissons), France
May 29, 1918

Salter Storrs Clark, Jr.

Company A: 311th Regiment; 78th Division;
Infantry; U. S. Army
Killed in action, Grand-Pré, France
October 19, 1918

Their Stories

in Extracts from their Letters and Diaries

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AND CAROLINE G. CLARK
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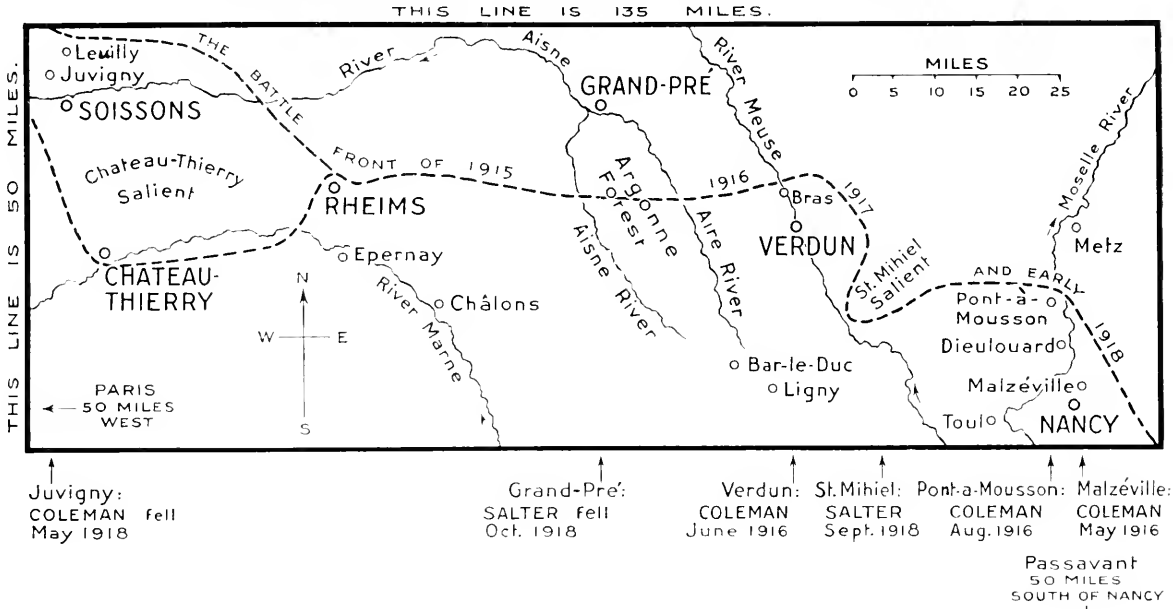
Where Coleman and Salter were in France



Who ventured life and love and youth,
For the great prize of death in battle.

Lowell.

This volume is printed as a memorial
to our sons, Coleman and Salter.

Salter Storrs Clark
Caroline Goddard Clark

Westfield
September
1919

COLEMAN

Chronology: Coleman

April 1, 1896. Born at Yonkers, N. Y.

1904—1905. A year in school, in Paris.

Sept., 1914. Entered Yale College.

April 29, 1916. Sailed from N. Y., as Amer. Amb. driver.

May 9, 1916. Landed at Bordeaux. 2 days there.

May 11, 1916. Arrived at Paris. 10 days wait for assignment.

May 21, 1916. Left Paris for Lorraine front (Malzéville). 2 weeks' amb. work.

June 5, 1916. Started for Verdun. 11 days getting there, and waiting for orders.

June 22, 1916. Began amb. work at Verdun, at the height of the German attack. 10 days in that work.

July 4-7, 1916. 3 days permission at Paris. 1 week at Ligny, awaiting orders.

July 14, 1916. Ligny to Dieulouard. 7½ weeks amb. work, Dieulouard and Pont-à-Mousson.

Sept. 4-14, 1916. 10 days permission, in France and Italy. 1 week at Pont-à-Mousson.

Sept. 21, 1916. Arrived at Paris, on way to the East. One month preparing for trip.

Oct. 15, 1916. Arrived at Marseilles.

Oct. 21, 1916. Sailed from Marseilles for Salonica. 9 days on voyage.

Oct. 30, 1916. Arrived at Salonica. 3 weeks waiting for ambulances.

Nov. 21, 1916. Left Salonica for the front.

Nov. 24, 1916. Arrived at Sakulevo. Six months ambulance work around Monastir.

May 31, 1917. Left Florina for trip into Thessaly. Two weeks on the way to Larissa, 12 days of same at Katarina.

June 13, 1917. Arrived at Larissa. 3 weeks in Larissa: some amb. work.

July 3, 1917. Left Larissa to go back to front. 3 weeks with Serbian army.

July 22, 1917. Enlistment with Amer. Amb. expired.

July 29, 1917. Left front for Salonica. 11 days in Salonica, waiting for vessel.

Aug. 8, 1917. Sailed from Salonica, for Italy. 6 days on voyage, night mostly.

Aug. 14, 1917. Arrived at Tarentum.

Aug. 22, 1917. Arrived at Paris. 1 month trying to get into some army.

Sept. 26, 1917. Enlisted in French Foreign Legion.

Sept. 27, 1917. Went to Artillery School at Fontainebleau. 4 months of study to be an artillery officer.

Jan. 24, 1918. Graduated as aspirant in French Army. 20 days permission.

Feby. 14, 1918. Went to Vannes, as member of 28th Regiment, Field Artillery. 3½ months in the French Army.

May 28, 1918. Mortally wounded at Juvigny; second day of the last great German offensive.

May 29, 1918. Died at the field hospital at Fontenoy (Aisne). His grave is No. 69, in the military cemetery du Pressoir, Ambleny, near Soissons.

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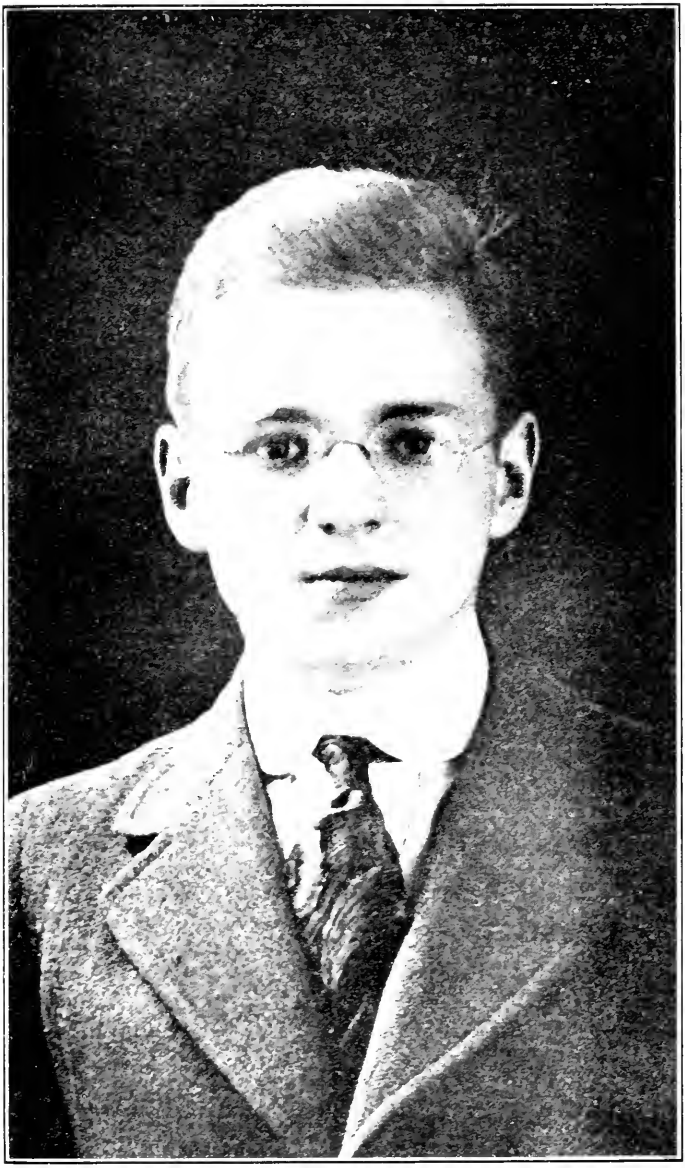


I

WANTING TO GO—MARCH AND APRIL, 1916

New Haven, Tuesday.

. . . . . .I feel that France needs men badly right now, and that I ought to go right away. When I reached Trubee on Monday, he showed me a cable he had just received from an official of the French government. It said "Secure twenty more ambulances and twenty men by early May" . . . . . .In response to that, he is going to try and raise the twenty men here. We feel, however, that if he gets five or six he will be lucky. It would be very fine if I could go off with that bunch. Don't you think that we can work it? I feel very restless up here, but am not letting my work slip any. . . . .The Glee Club has got to go up to West Point this Saturday; so I'll be home for an hour or two Sunday.*

Sunday.

There is nothing I had rather do than that work. It is certainly the opportunity of a lifetime. For not only would it be a wonderful experience for me, but it is doing something which is absolutely worth while. It would be hard work and pretty morbid at times; but when you consider the good it would be doing, I don't think the hardships or discomforts ought to count. . . . I would be absolutely willing to drop a class back. . . as far as money goes, it means a loss of $300 or $400, but I think I could make that up. . . . . .I certainly feel very intensely on the subject.

*All extracts are from letters, unless marked "diary." Names of places in brackets [ ], were not in the letters, on account of the censorship; but are gathered from the diary, or from the official history.

Thursday.

I received your letter last night, and was awfully glad to hear that you were favorably inclined. . . . . .The Dean said that I would receive full credit for all I had done so far; he said that going abroad with the American Ambulance was a fine thing to do, and that he would not discourage anyone contemplating doing it. . . . . I want you to realize that I do not look upon this as a sightseeing trip, mixed in with a lot of adventure, but I appreciate the hard labor it will be.

Sunday.

Have fixed it up so that I work every day in the Ford garage from 1 to 6 P.M. . . . . .Am studying about machines all spare time. . . . . .Got hold of an Academic Freshman who is driving a jitney around New Haven. . . . .He told me that anytime I saw him on his route, I should hail him and he would let me drive the thing around myself, which I am doing every day. I am doing it at night too. . . . . .We go right through the heavy traffic down town; which was quite a feat for me, the first day.

II

NEW YORK TO BORDEAUX

May 7, 1916.

We have now entered the submarine zone and all the life boats are over the rail, and all ready for an emergency. Yesterday, they dropped a barrel over the stern, and had some target practice with the "soixante-quinze", as everybody calls it. Tonight, all the lights will be put out, and we have been cautioned to have our life-preservers handy. But nobody seems to be anxious, and I suppose you are doing more worrying than I am. . Opposite my cabin is a young Belgian officer, who has been over in the U. S. buying up horses for the Belgian Army. He was at Dixmude and Ypres, and has told me some very wonderful and horrible experiences. He is very nice, and I talk to him a lot. He can't speak a word of English. He said that everywhere in the U. S. the Germans interfered with all his contracts. He goes right back to the trenches now. . . . .At the end of the concert, last night, a young opera singer who was on board sang the "Marseillaise" wrapped in the French flag. It was very inspiring.

May 10, 1916.

Arrived safe last night. We sighted land about ten in the morning, and soon after entered the Gironde. And then came one of the most beautiful landscapes I have ever seen. . . . .It is very seldom that I am sentimental, but the beauty of it all got to me yesterday, and the realization that it was France, sent a thrill right through me.

As we passed up the river, we went by literally countless ships from all sorts of countries, who cheered as we went by. I saw boats there from England, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Greece, Spain, Italy, Argentine, Brazil, and Russia, all loaded down heavily, and bound for Bordeaux. As the river became narrower we passed quite close to the little villages, and in the little square on the river's edge, the entire population gathered, (a sad touch—for they were mostly woman), and waved to us, shouting all sorts of greetings—"Voilà! Elle est arrivée encore." "Avez-vous vu des soumarins?" This morning we went through the custom house. As soon as I said "ambulancier", he OKed my stuff without looking through it. . . . .Well, I'll say good-bye. Everything is going along wonderfully.

III

PARIS AND PREPARATIONS

May 12, 1916.

Lycée Pasteur—Paris. Well, here I am at last. So far it has been just a succession of strange and unusual things. . . . .You can't get very far away from the war anywhere in France. The first unusual thing in Bordeaux was the thousands upon thousands of soldiers, evidently home on leave. . . . .One of the most touching things was the women in the cathedral, praying. Upon many of the altars (the little ones around back) were thousands of candles. Bordeaux seems to be the centre of the Jeanne d'Arc shrines. Upon one of them were stacks and stacks of pictures of soldiers, and on them were written, "Jeanne d'Arc, protect my son." "Be merciful, God, he is all I have". . . . .In the parks, crowds of little boys were continually playing the universal game of war contre les boches. You could hear their shouts, blocks and blocks off. They had scouts, trenches, ambulances, etc. By the way, the word "ambulancier" is a magic word here. If ever in a quandary, I just say that, and everybody is immediately kind. . . . . I am gladder every minute that I came over.

The ride from Bordeaux to Paris was a beautiful one; little farms, chateaus off on the hills, miles upon miles of vines . . . . . .Very few men in the fields, i. e. young men; most were old women, like the old charbonniere of the Rue d'Edimbourgh — whom, by the way, I saw yesterday, still sawing logs, out in front of the old place . . . . . .Paris, as I first saw it, was dark, as it is every night . . . . . .

This morning, in the Metro, I was talking in English to Davis. A fat, officious woman suddenly burst out in

French, "I can understand just enough German to know that you are a dirty Boche." I was pretty flustered and rather hurt, but got myself together enough to say, "I beg pardon, Madam, but you are insulting me. I am an American Ambulancier, and I would say that I expected a rather different reception." She shut up like a clam, and I felt very much relieved. . . . .

American Ambulance Hospital, Paris, May 16, 1916.

I am pretty well fixed here now, and everything is running along smoothly. My position is "field service reserve." At this moment I am first on the list, which means that as soon as a man comes in from the field, I go right out and fill his place. My uniform has been delayed, so, as yet have not been able to go and get wounded from the train, as only men in uniform are allowed to do that. . . . .All of us, when on the street, have to salute every French, English and Belgian officer . . . . .Don't know whether I told you or not in my last letter, that I had passed my driving test. . . . .

This has been a fine experience so far. It makes one tingle all over to see the way the French are taking the war. Everyone seems to be in it, in some way or another. No one seems to be worried at all as to the outcome, but all realize it will take a good while yet to beat Germany. . . . .

Here is an incident related to me by one of the drivers here. A fellow had just had a leg amputated and was in terrible pain. . . . .and he moaned awfully at being moved. A comrade, who was just across the car, and was much worse wounded. . . . .as he heard his friend groaning, said, "cheer up, mon vieux, don't make it hard for the ambulanciers." At this the first one gritted his teeth and stopped moaning immediately. . . .

Well, as I have a hard day in the garage tomorrow, I'll stop here.

IV

LORRAINE

Tuesday May 23, 1916.
"Somewhere in France," [Malzèville]

Here I am; a good way from Paris, and in some more strange, though quaint, surroundings. . . .Sunday morning I went to La Chapelle with the Paris Section and helped unload a "blessé" train. It was awful. Four of us were assigned to each car, each one being loaded with eighteen poor fellows. They seemed all to be young, some in a state of horrible mutilation; an arm or both legs gone, and a stinking mass of raw unrecognizable, bleeding pus, for what was once a face. The putrid stench of old dirty wounds almost put me out. We would hold the stretcher up to the berth, and the "blessé", with the help of another man, would try to sidle into it, sometimes amid the most piteous cries. One poor boy tried to be brave, and not murmur when we moved him, but the pain was too much, and he cried like a baby and became unconscious. All those who were able to, said, "Thanks, thanks, comrade", or some other little phrase of thanks and appreciation. That evening, I was given my pass, and I left by the Gare de l'Est. . . . .

This little village is a dear little place, very much like Gruyere, where, you, Papa and I spent such a happy day three summers ago. In the centre are the old women, washing away in the public troughs; children and old men everywhere; but no young or middle-aged men, except a few casual soldiers. . . . .

We all live in a little tumble-down old inn; and besides the fact that it has a roof you can't say much for it, as far as comfort is concerned. When I arrived they

were giving it the weekly fumigating process. . . . . The first thing I did was to build myself a bed; which consisted of nailing two cross-pieces on two saw-horses, and then stapling down chicken wire on that. . . . .Today I was assigned my car, an old one, in rather bad shape. Several fellows have offered to buy my American flag, to put on their ambulance, (where I am putting it), but I cannot give it up, after that last day in New York* . . . . .The thought that we are trying to do what I think we all feel as a duty to France, always cheers me up. . . . .Have just been in the little Catholic Church. In one corner is a little altar draped with French flags. On the altar is a list of eighty names, and the phrase "Who died on the field of honor." I don't believe there can be more than 1,100 or 1,200 people in the town. . . . .

Malzèville, [near Nancy], June 1, 1916.

By now, I am pretty well settled, and am leading a pretty regular life. At 7:05 we must all be down to breakfast, under penalty of washing an automobile. Breakfast, of course, is the regular coffee and rolls, i. e. chicory and bread—no coffee nor any rolls.

This sector is very quiet, so there is really very little to do. . . . .But as anything might happen any time, we always feel as though we were doing a duty. A battalion was in town from the front the other day, and a military band gave a concert in the town square. All the soldiers, officers and privates, and all the civilians, gathered around and listened. It was a very picturesque sight. The leader, noticing eight or ten of us standing together, asked us at the end, if we would sing Tipperary; and as everyone seemed to want it, we started out. A young soldier with a fine tenor voice,

*It was given him, just before he went up the gangplank of the "Rochambeau," at New York.

Coleman: Amer. Amb. Field Service: Oct. 1916.

sang the verse (in French), and we all bawled out the chorus (in English). It went off finely and we had to repeat. One of the French soldiers told me it was a fine thing for the morale to see the English and French get together that way. Certainly everyone of them knew us afterwards, and everywhere we went, we'd hear, "Allo! Tommy!" . . . . .Don't know whether or not I told you about my first ride at night. It was an exciting affair, on account of the speed we had to make, the road being pitch black. . . . .

My car wore out three brake bands in three days, and it made me wild, because I knew it wasn't my fault, and I didn't want Mr. Hill to think I was useless* . . . . However, there is enough the matter with that car to drive a mechanic mad. Among other things are; leaky radiator, all brakes broken, reverse chatters, oil leaks, lamps gone, no seat, so I sit on the gas tank, 3 bad tires, and the whole thing rattles to beat the band. However, the engine itself is fine, and that is the big thing after all. She can pull hills that no other car can make.

The fellows here I like more and more. . . . .The brother of one of my classmates turned up, and he and I are the youngest here. Bluethenthal, the Princeton football center of a few years back, also showed up a little while ago. Most of the fellows are Harvard men, with a sprinkling of Yale, Cornell, and Pennsylvania. . . . . Everything here is fine, and I was never more contented in anything I have ever done. . . . . Was talking with a young Frenchman yesterday. He wanted to know when the next presidential election would be, and who would be elected. I told him that in times of war and excitement, Roosevelt stood a very good chance of getting it. He jumped at it quickly

---

*Coleman's familiar name in the section, from the time of this incident to the end, was B B.

and said, "Ah! That will be good for us!" They seem to be on to Ted.

Aired my blankets last night, and shook them out to get out the gnats and fleas, which have been on the rampage lately. Have also bought a special anti-itch powder, which does wonders.

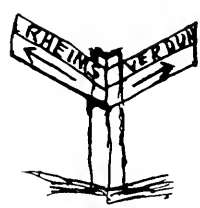
June 5, 1916.

This morning we got our orders to move. . . . . All Malzèville was out to wave us a goodbye as we passed through.

[*Bar-le-Duc, from diary—June 7, 1916.*]

On the way we passed troops, cavalry, convois, guns, couriers, ammunition trains—all headed for Verdun—a most solemn and impressive sight. The name Verdun, has something magic about it, something gruesome and crushing. As we passed one troop one of the men called out, "Eh bien, mes vieux, deux jours encore, et nous serons prêts pour vous", and he called it out cheerily, and everybody laughed; but it went right into me, and gave me a chill—Verdun, always Verdun! . . . . .

We are stationed at present on the main street, and hundreds of old Madeleine-Bastilles plunge by with soldiers in them. At the end of the street is a fork in the road, and at the fork is a sign in big black letters like this:



The Rheims road is smooth and unused, while the Verdun road is deeply rutted; and convoy after convoy tears around the corner, and regiment after regiment passes out of sight . . . . .

Last night 250 empty Madeleine-Bastilles went tearing by on the Verdun road. They are going to get the division which will be replaced by ours, the 129th.

Ligny (diary) *June 9, 1916.*

At last the order to move came, and we were much surprised, for we were ordered back to Ligny. . . . . This evening we had gas mask trial, and were doled out iodine, and first aid. It certainly looks like business . . . . .Every one, except the old Alsace men, was pleased.

Ligny (diary) June 9, 1916.

At 6 A. M. promptly, we all piled out, and took again the road for Bar-le-Duc. . . . .In a little while we came to the Verdun cross-roads, and sure enough we took the right hand road.*

*This road from Bar-le-Duc to Verdun has been called "The Sacred Way"; and most appropriately, considering its pre-eminent service to France and to civilization at this very time. But if that phrase is meant as a translation of "la route sacrée" which it was called by the soldiers, one may doubt the correctness of the translation. See Coleman's letter of Mar. 25, 1917.

V

VERDUN

June 12, 1916.

We are all wet to the skin most of the time. . . . . The mud is something awful. . . . .I have to keep taking my glasses off and scraping the mud off, so I can see. . . . .A couple of nights ago the order to move on came in the middle of the night, 2 A. M., and it was pouring hard. . . . Am now pretty well used to living anywhere, and in spite of all the wet and exposure, am feeling better than I ever felt before. . . . .

This P. M., walked up to the top of a hill nearby, and way, way, off in the distance, I could see the puffs of smoke of the French batteries. Overhead a bunch of aeroplanes were buzzing away, and down in the valley I could see the defile of a regiment or so, and a battery of 75's hurrying along. It's pictures like that which you don't forget; and as I write now, I can hear the far off booming of cannon. It keeps up all night and all day, week after week. . . . .It is a wonderful life, and I never felt more contented or enthusiastic over anything I have ever done before. . . . .

The Frenchmen all want Teddy to be elected, believing of course that he will bring us into the war. They ask continually whether we are for the Allies or the Boches, and I always am at great pains to reassure them. In spare time, I like nothing better than to pick up a couple of the soldiers, and get their views of the situation. . . . .The aviators have an extreme contempt for the German pilots. . . . .

It is great fun to pass a regiment en route. As soon as they see us coming they yell "Boue!" (mud), and

beat it for the gutter. When they see who it is, they shout all the English they know, at us: "English Spoken!" "Yes", "How do you do?" "Allo! Tommy!" Every once in a while we will yell back, "On les aura!" ("We'll get them!") or "Vive la France!" and they are all tickled to death. It's all simply wonderful, and I could write on forever, on just the little things we are seeing every day. . . . .A couple of days ago, had occasion to carry the most horribly wounded man you can imagine—one arm gone—both legs in plaster cast—his face pulpy—and the most nauseous stench of gangrene you can imagine—with all that to worry about, what did he do but smoke a cigarette with his one good hand, and ask me in a natural voice if I thought Teddy had much chance of being elected. . . .

Souhesmes, June 15, 1916. (diary)

I am wondering what you all would say and feel, if you knew tonight that I was 6 miles from Verdun. I am more and more thankful for your sakes, that the censor forbids mentioning names in letters. This trip from Bar-le-Duc up toward Verdun has been the most marvellous thing I have ever been through in my life.

Saturday, June 16, 1916.

Just at present we are on our way to a sector where there will be more for us to do. We have been moving forward about 25 kilometers a day now, for a couple of weeks. Now, we are getting near to business, and we can hear it louder all the time. There is more than I could possibly write about, and the impression you get of everything—all the artillery, regiments, convoys of autos and wagons, one endless stream of them all day and all night, and the noise and the *smell* of it all—

you'd never forget it. Right this minute there are fifteen stationary balloons in sight, and eighteen aeroplanes. These latter make one continuous buzz all day long, and at night the artillery keeps you awake. It is enough to make anyone sentimental: but when you see everything from so close at hand, it sort of overwhelms you.

Last night I stood alongside of the main road and watched the procession—you can see it at any time of night or day. On one side of the road there went up a stream of big trucks, loaded with soldiers going to the front. They were all laughing and singing and in good spirits, and their uniforms were bright and new. On the other side of the road came the trucks bringing the used-up regiments from the front. These fellows were covered with mud from head to foot, and not a sound from anyone of them. Just things like that get to you something awful. And the more you are here, the more you see; and the gladder you are you are over here helping. . . . .

Everywhere we go a bunch of soldiers gather around us, and ask all sorts of questions. The principal thing they ask is, "How much are you paid to do this?" and when we tell them we are all volunteers, they just can't make it out. . . . . Let me know if Congress ever does anything. By the way, is Hughes pro-German? The French think that he is.

June 22, 1916. (diary).

At 8:30 this morning we left Souhesmes and rode 6 km. up the road to Balycourt, which will be our final cantonment, as long as we are on the Verdun sector. We are stationed up on the side of a hill, right next to a temporary hospital. Right in front of us is a railroad, the main railroad to Verdun. We expected it to be very busy, but as a matter of fact not a train runs over

it, as it is cut just above us. At this point we are just 6 km. from Verdun, and from the lines themselves just 5 miles. . . . .

This evening I talked with an artilleryman who had just returned from Morthomme. He said that the French had 95 75s on a 1½ km. front, and about 40-155s, and 20 or 30-220s or larger. They fire from 15 to 23 shots a minute, and the total expenditure of French shells per day at Verdun is over 150,000. We start work tonight—15 cars go to Verdun, and the other 7 stay here as reserve. The 15 carry wounded from Bras to Verdun most all night long, and then from Verdun to Balycourt till about noon. We handle about 200 to 350 wounded a night, and it is a terrible job.

June 24, 1916 (diary).

Yesterday morning at 7 o'clock I started carrying wounded from Balycourt to the Cour des Malades, about 6 km. This I did until 6 o'clock in the afternoon, when my axle broke. With the help of the mechanic we got it off, and put on a new one, in time to leave at 9 o'clock for Verdun. . . . . It looked like a busy night, as the French batteries were firing double. . . . About 10 o'clock I started out for Bras. The road was packed with ammunition convoys, traveling kitchens, and what not. As soon as it is dark they shoot the ammunition out to the batteries; so our first couple of trips are the most exciting. The artillery are galloping most of the time, trusting to their noise to keep the road clear. The heavy guns swing back and forth across the road, and scare you terribly, as at best it's pretty close passing.

Going up to the Carrières we found some new shell holes, and a building was blazing away all by itself. Not 50 yards off, the French batteries made an awful

racket, and at the top of the hill a tree had fallen across the road, and had to be cleared away. Streams of blessés came across the fields, and begged us to take them. German searchlights (fusees) shot up in the air, and lighted up the road like day, showing a line of ambulances beating it for Bras, and soon we saw shells bursting over Bras. Going on into Bras, we found ourselves right in the midst of things, as shells were bursting everywhere, and were digging holes 5 ft. deep in the road.

We were all bunched right in the middle of the town, and spent our time jumping up, and then dropping flat on our faces in the road, as we'd hear a Zing come our way. 50 ft. from us a horse dropped, and at the poste de secours 2 brancardiers were killed. I shall never forget that feeling of scared helplessness that was with me all the while. The shriek of a shell coming your way goes thru you like a dentist's drill. Most of the voitures had lead in them. The wounded, waiting to be taken away, were in a horrible state of fright, and couldn't use their beans at all. They kept saying: "Oh, les cochons ils nous font de mal, pour rien; les sales vaches." Coming back my trio groaned away, and yelled at every bump. A couple of shells burst right in back, and the lead pattered all around, and splattered me with mud. When they exploded, the blessés yelled something awful, and begged me to go faster. One of them coughed a pool of blood on the floor.

I made three trips to Bras before daylight; when we all have to stop, because the road is visible. However, the wounded pour in all the time, and have to wait there 18 hours, until we can come again. At about 2:30 we start carrying the wounded from Verdun to Balycourt, a long hard drive. Only a part of this road is being shelled, so there is not much excitement. . . . .I worked until 10 this morning, and then dropped out on

the grass, and slept till 7 this evening. Tomorrow, at 6 a. m. I start again. . . . . .

A French artillery officer told me that there was a gun at Verdun for every 15 ft., and that there isn't a place where you can put a franc, that has not been hit. The soldiers live in a shell hole, and have to sleep there and eat there. . . . There is no chance to do any burying. . . . .the stench, they say, is frightful. . . . .He told me how the Germans attacked thru a little ravine which his 75s covered. They came out 200 at a time, and all he had to do was to drop 3 or 4 shells right in the midst, and there was a company absolutely gone. He said they kept that up all one day—never gaining an inch.

June 26, 1916 (diary).

Last night I was awakened at 2:30, and told to go up to Verdun with five others to help the other 12 men. It was raining hard, and my radiator was leaking, and my car wouldn't start, and it was awfully disagreeable. Got up to Verdun, and started out for Bras: met the Lieut. who told me only to go as far as the Croix de Fer, as it was beginning to get light. . . . .The road was full of galloping artillery, as usual on the left hand side. It's about the most anxious part of the trip, passing guns. Several cars did get grazed by them, and they just swept everything on that side of the car off. About a kilometre of the road was being shelled, and it was no fun at all. That horrible moaning shriek, coming your way, and then a loud explosion, followed by a patter of mud and rocks. The explosion itself isn't as bad as that shriek. . . . .

Once something black loomed up, and I stopped short. I got out, and it was a pile of dead horses, 4 of them, with a live one, a fifth, at the bottom and shrieking. In the corner was a heap—a dead man. All that remained

of the wagon was two broken wheels and a little broken wood. . . . I was about 15 minutes behind the accident. . . . We have certainly been awfully lucky.

Coming back I met 8 or ten blessés, who had just come across the fields. I took the one couché, and then the fight started as to who should be the other 4. They knew I was the last car until tonight. . . . Each one showed me his wound, and told me all about it: it was a piteous sight. I finally selected the worst ones, and beat it off, while the others clamored piteously after me. . . . .My car is beginning to smell awful, and I can't seem to do anything for it. Ever since we've been at Verdun, the misery of the war just grates on you more and more. Sometimes you almost think it would be better to have it stop now, than to finish it. . . . .

June 28, 1916. (diary).

The last three nights have been something terrible for me. In the first place, I have had little or no sleep, and in the early morning, when you've already worked 10 solid hours, it's a terrible temptation to go to sleep at the wheel. . . . .In the second place the weather has been terrible, raining most of the nights, and if there's any greater strain on your eyes and nervous system, than to peer out into the pitch blackness for hours at a time, I want to know it. Thirdly, we have been under shell-fire most all of the time, and I don't believe there's a more terrible sensation than to be driving along, already very tense and on edge, and then to hear that ungodly shriek. You can't duck, and you've got to keep right on. . . . . Now I am just about all in—so absolutely worn out and depressed, I never felt before.

Poor Barb* got his, night before last. A big shell exploded right behind him, knocking the car to shreds,

*William M. Barber.

killing his 3 blessés, and giving him a bad wound in the back. . . . . I passed by it about 10 minutes after it had happened, and it just about broke my heart to see it, and to wonder who had got it. Anyhow the poor kid is alive, and there's a chance that he may not be crippled. Our lieut. got him the croix de guerre, and the military medal for it, the highest honor a French soldier can gain. We are all very proud of him, and certainly envy him.

I could write all day on the innumerable narrow escapes we all have had. When you look at the holes of all sizes that have been put thru our cars, you can realize that we've been just awfully lucky. I have been covered with mud many a time, from a shell bursting, but never had a scratch from iron. Yesterday P. M. they dropped 8 or 10 big shells right in the midst of the Balycourt hospital, killing a dozen or so, and wounding a couple of dozen. . . . .

Every day we see along the road new shell holes, new ruined houses, a new bunch of dead horses pushed into the gutter. It is simply horrible from beginning to end. And yet it is all strangely fascinating, and you don't want to leave it. Last night I had to change a tire right in the midst of shelling.

Once in Verdun we feel as safe as a church—altho really even there it's quite dangerous. As we come in, we line up in the square, and go to sleep until it's our turn. Overhead they go whistling by. . . . The fact that all the buildings on the square are wrecks proves that there is danger; but when we once get there we are so tired that we go right to sleep, and never hear a thing until Mr. Hill pulls our leg, and tells us to go back to that hellish Bras again.

This A. M. passed by a regiment returning from the trenches at Fleury. A sad sight that regiment was: at best it was only a quarter its full strength. They were

straggling slowly along, and passed a new regiment, every one alert and marching brightly along. It must have been a bum send-off for the new regiment. . . .A division stays in the trenches 8 or 10 days at Verdun: at other places, they may stay a year.

July 1, 1916. (diary)

This evening as we were waiting to go to Verdun, Mr. Hill brought word that we were thru. Immediately a loud shout of joy went up from everybody. . . . I don't know whether or not I can describe vividly enough the sense of horror and terror that has settled down over us the last four or five days; because, when we set out in the evening we really do not know whether we will come back alive or not. I have now worked three nights straight, and am simply exhausted. . . . I think perhaps the most morbid thing of all is passing the wreck of Barber's car. You always know where it is, because you pass a dead horse on the left just before, and if you don't just miss his head by an inch or so, your hind off wheel goes down into a shell hole. . . .The Boches have shelled the car in the daytime, till now it's just a heap of wood and iron.

Last night they sent up a fusee, which lighted up the road and me too. Right away after it died out—zip—some shrapnel burst near me. Then another fusee, and some more shrapnel. They followed me for 3 miles, and more than 2 or 3 of them broke within 50 ft. of me. Going into Petit Bras last night, there was an enormous flash and crash simultaneously, right in front of me. So near was it that it deafened me a minute, and I couldn't see anything; so I stopped, and waited until I could see, and my heart had gone down a bit. Not more than 5 seconds after stopping, the gunpowder smell reached me. Things like that take everything out

of you. . . . . I think one of the most terrifying things is to see Bras being shelled when you are still five miles off. Gradually you come nearer, and it becomes brighter and brighter, and louder and louder, and all the while you know you have got to go right into the middle of it.

This morning I was about 2 km. outside of Verdun, and felt perfectly safe. Suddenly, however, a terrific crash right in front, and clouds of mud and earth came down on me. A few minutes later I was going quietly along, when all of a sudden 8 Frenchmen dove into a ditch at the side of the road. Immediately the shell burst a half a mile further on, and they all crawled out, cursing because the trench had four feet of water in it. That was one of the funniest things I ever saw.

When it's so dark out there on the road, and you see so many thousands of different things moving around, you just stand in awe of the bean-work in back of it all: artillery caissons going in this direction, cannons in that, infantry a third, rolling kitchens a fourth, batteries booming everywhere, shells busting up convoys every once in a while—it looks like confusion, but really it is the most consummate coördination imaginable, and you feel like a pigmy in the centre of it all.

July 3, 1916.

On July 2 we received the expected ordre de mouvement, and were told to go back to Ligny, and about 6 o'clock we were once more there, where the remains of the 129th were already straggling in. Their losses had been terrible—way over half. The 106th had lost three-quarters; the 297th two-thirds; the 114th over a half; the 359th a half; the 121st five-sixths. . . . . They have a lot of respect for us now. . . . .The 106th are for the moment the heroes of France, because it was they who,

when half of the 121st were captured, and the 114th were giving ground, rushed in with bayonets, and beat back the Germans. Of one company of over 200, 22 came back. They said that he who has not seen Verdun, has seen nothing of the war. . . . .When these fellows told us about their time at Thiaumont, you can imagine that we said nothing about our little ride to Bras. . . . .

In the newspapers I have often read articles of how troops coming back from Verdun had gleaming eyes, chanting "passeront pas," throwing everlasting defiance at the Kaiser. But that sort of stuff is outrageous lying, because you couldn't imagine a more hopeless, downcast lot, than the regiments returning from Verdun. Not a sound do they make, as they plod along, in loose ranks. . . . . They say, the Boches despair of taking it, and we despair of being able to hold it; how long do you think it will last?

The French sous-officiers are the finest bunch of fellows you can imagine, educated, refined, cheerful, and always clean. Everybody looks on them as the best that France has to offer.

Paris, Hotel Continental, July 5, 1916.

Our section has been given two days permission in Paris, as a sort of reward for the work we have just been through during the last two weeks. . . . . Everybody is wildly excited over the news of the allied offensive [Somme]. . . . . Since being in Paris I have spent a large part of the time in the tub. . . . . Have not yet had a sick moment, or even a cold. . . . . Feel fine in every way, and perfectly cheerful and contented.

Ligny, July 9, 1916 (diary).

Yesterday afternoon took a walk down the canal. . . . waited for a canal boat to come along and take me back.

The old woman of the boat soon came up from the hold to talk to me, and brought with her a bottle of wine and some crackers. . . . . This boat was drawn by 3 donkeys. . . . . The third donkey was a little fellow who was fastened behind the other two in such a way that if he stopped for a second, the rope would yank his neck. The little fellow was cute and just managed to stay at a point where he neither pulled himself, nor was pulled along by the other two.

Last night Tink, Potter, Mr. Hill and I took a long walk just about sunset, in the other direction. I think it was one of the prettiest walks I have ever taken. Passed locks, and canal boats drawn up to the side of the canal for the night, where the two horses, having gone up a special gang-plank, are eating their supper in the big stall: little villages every mile, with the church, old and musty-looking, silhouetted higher up, against the sky. In the villages themselves old fellows and their wives sit out in front of their little stone houses, to gossip and take the evening air, many of them having cats, which prowl around in dark corners or else purr contentedly from the doorstep. All sorts of flowers in bloom added color to it all, while the absence of your people made it all seem a little sad, and not quite as it ought to be.

On reading the above over, it sounds rotten. However, it was a pretty and quaint enough picture to put a kind of spell on most anybody the least romantic.

VI

PONT-A-MOUSSON AND DIEULOUARD

Sunday, July 16, 1916.

My last letter I wrote you from Paris. After returning to the section we spent another week en repos, and then we moved to this quaint little town, [Dieulouard, pronounced Doola.] Here it is not dangerous, as at Verdun, and we are perfectly satisfied, as I guess all of us have had all the fire-eating that we want for a long time to come. . . . . The little town we are in now, is one of the quaintest things I have ever seen. It is built around an old, old, castle dating from 975 A. D. Of the castle itself, there remains only one big stretch of wall—probably the bailey and the donjon. But the interesting part of it, is that the people have taken over every room in the place, and live in it, like a bunch of ants. Where the wall has fallen in, they have just built a little roof over it, and there is a new room. A big heavy stone bridge leads from the side of the hill to the castle, and all around it and under it, they have built their little stone houses, with red tiled roofs, and high-peaked gables. The whole business is exactly like the illustrations of castles in Grimm's Fairy Tales, or Howard Pyle's "Wonder Clock". . . . .

Our real center of operations is a town about five or six kilometers further on. [Pont-à-Mousson.] One week ten of us will go up and work, while the rest will hang around here, doing hospital to hospital work. . . . . In the town we will have a wonderful place to live. It is somebody's country villa and is almost new. It has electric lights and a *bath-tub*. . . . .The caretaker is a French woman, who is crazy to have us come there . . . . . When we appeared for the first time yesterday, she almost went off the handle; she was so glad to see some more Americans. . . . .We expect to stay on

this part of the front for about a month. One of the nicest things about the whole experience has been the little villages we have stopped in, which, on a regular sightseeing trip, you'd never even hear of. . . . .

July 24, 1916. Tuesday.

Yesterday was a red-letter day for me, for I received six letters from home. . . . .Feel at this moment as if I had been home for a couple of days. . . . .It is always such a quaint and friendly life that you don't get tired of it, even when there is not much work to be done. Aside from five or six aeroplane fights to watch every day, there is not much excitement. . . . . Rigaud, our cook, has been suffering from a sore tooth, and our sufferings from the cooking increase in direct ratio. Yesterday, he came back with it strung around his neck on a chain, so we feel much relieved. . . . . Opened my valise today. It had not been opened for a month, and what happened was just what would happen, if you went out into the woods and turned over a big rock. At least six big insects hopped out and beat it for the great outside. . . . .A couple of octogenariennes yesterday, told me that if the Kaiser was captured and came through this place, each would take a pitch fork and finish up the job for France. . . . . Just at present, am reading Captain Fracasse in French . . . . .think I read a book every three or four days. The only thing that makes me mad over here is the cruelty with which the drivers treat their horses. . . . . Did you know that the average life of a horse, carrying stuff to the front, was 27 days—not a bit more. This of course is not due to cruelty but to actual shell fire. . . . .We have found a fine place to swim in the river. [The Moselle] . . . . .Forgot to mention that five of our fellows and our French lieutenant got the croix de guerre for our work at the last place.

[Verdun.] That is a fine thing for the American Ambulance, and we are all proud of them.

July 24, 1916. (diary).

This morning I really had an exciting time. Needing some exercise, I started out after breakfast for a long walk, foolishly not getting a laisser-passer from Mr. Hill. I started out across the river. . . . .saw a sign "St. Geneviève 1 km. 500 m." . . . . .finally landed in a little village on top of a high hill, commanding the lines within a radius of 20 miles. It was horribly shot up. . . . .Thought I'd climb up a little further. . . .Suddenly a man appeared and said: "Halte!" behind him a lieutenant, and behind him a colonel, who said in a harsh voice, "Conduisez ici cette bonhomme la," bonhomme meaning in this case, rascal.

I was pretty much scared, and went with him. They took me downstairs to an underground place, and started interrogations. When I told him I was just walking about, and had no laisser-passer he said, "We consider you as a German spy," and then he asked for my papers. I certainly got them out quickly, before they should start feeling in my pocket, and should find my camera, the very thought of which caused sweat to run down my glasses.

Well, after looking over my papers he began to look at me less suspiciously. He took me thru a net work of underground galleries, and finally had me in a telephone booth. I told him our section was in Dieulouard, and all about myself. He called up Hill, and asked him if there was a conducteur by the name of Clark in that section. The answer to that was, "Yes, two." After that I was all right, but I was escorted to the captain of the town, and had another inquisition, and finally he gave me laisser-passer back to Dieulouard, and also a man to see me well out of town.

August 4, 1916.

A few days ago a man died in my ambulance, which makes the second one which has passed out in it. . . . It just about makes you sick when it happens. . . . . Nobody now has any longer any doubt as to the ultimate victory of the Allies. . . . .I feel more and more as if I were a part of France, and am more and more thankful for that year in Paris which gave me the feeling. . . . .

Have never seen anything that could strain your eyes more than the continual peering out into the darkness, to see if there is anything ahead. When you go through a wood you can see absolutely nothing, but you would be surprised at what an instinct you can develop, for feeling whether there is anything ahead or not. When it is absolutely pitch-black it is not so bad as when there is just a little light, for then the shadows are confusing, and you don't know whether the black spot ahead is a cart or just an unusually dark place. However, as I have never run into anything yet, I don't feel very anxious any more. Have more and more respect for a Ford. They go absolutely anywhere, and if treated right, they will last a long time. My car has been running since Sept., 1914, and has been doing the hardest work any car could do. . . . .Her engine is just as good as ever.*

Aug. 6, 1916 (diary)

Last evening Mrs. W. K. Vanderbilt came through with Dr. Andrew, and paid us a visit. She was very, very nice looking. She talked a while and then left for Pont-à-Mousson, leaving us each two boxes of cigarettes. Wish my car had been in the village. It is one of the first she gave, and is now a pretty shaky affair, but it certainly has done service. Up at Pont-à-Mousson

*No. 54, Contributed by Mrs. William K. Vanderbilt.

they had a bombardment, and she was hustled out of bed down into the cellar. She also went out on a call to Auberge St. Pierre. She had on wonderful clothes, but not flashy at all. . . . . The Médecin Chef gave us quite a eulogy, because we were getting wounded down to Belleville in less than two hours after they were wounded, while the old Fiats never did it in less than three hours and a half.

Aug. 16, 1916.

Three or four of the old men have left to go back to America, their time having expired. It is quite hard to see them go, for, for three months now, the section has been practically intact, and everybody has been friendly toward every one else. . . . .The last letter I received from father had been opened by the censorship. The letter contained a violent denunciation of Germany and must have warmed the censor's heart. . . . .the longer I am over here, the more I want to see (as father does, too) the Kaiser and Kronprinz, and the whole family, in fact Germany too, swept off Europe forever; as far as any military force or menace is concerned. . . . .Don't know how many times I have heard a wounded man say, "Germany has ruined my life; may God punish her." A soldier's final conviction on the German nation is, "C'est une race si sale, qu'elle ne doit pas vivre." A rather elderly, and entirely good humored and easy going cook, one whom you would never think capable of any harsh feelings, said to me, "When we shall be in Germany, I shall show no pity for that dirty race. They murdered my family, when they invaded the north. They shall pay double for it."

August 20, 1916.

Am up here near the front now; and it is fine. Madame Marin is still cooking for us, and we are living in

luxury. We have the whole château to ourselves, with fine beds, good food, and a shower bath.

Did I tell you about the decorating of our four men by the General? We all lined up in the big square in front of the hospital, and waited for an hour for the General to arrive. [Gen. Garby.] Finally, a little fellow, in an old overcoat, torn puttees (one of them nearly falling off), and an old helmet, on crooked, jumped out of a big car, and flourishing a big cane—about the calibre of Father's shillalah—walked toward the centre of the square, while everybody saluted. He started speaking, and then you saw what he really was. He had little black eyes that jumped about and seemed to take in everything; and everything he said was right to the point, and came out sharp and quick. After pinning the croix de guerre on the men, he kissed them on each cheek, congratulated them, turned on his heel, hopped into his car, and was off in a cloud of dust. The soldiers all love him, and never are tired of telling how he comes and eats with them, borrows a cigarette, and talks with them. Altho he has a bunch of decorations he never has been seen to wear one. He looked like business all the way through. Were it not for two little silver stars, almost hidden by the cuff of his overcoat, you'd never distinquish him from an ordinary soldier. . .

Since being in France I have gained ten pounds.

Aug. 31, 1916.

I get a six days' permission in a few days and if I can work it, am going down to Italy to see Auntie Kay. Receive letters from her about twice a week. She speaks of heroic self-sacrifice, and nobleness of soul, but if she could only realize what a good time I'm having, and how comfortable I am, and in the midst of such good friends, I don't believe the "heroic self-sacrifice" stuff would keep up. French is coming along finely

now, and I can speak with almost anyone without much trouble. Can't say I am thinking of coming home yet. The more I am over here, the more inspiring it all is. This very moment I am sitting in the back of my car writing, while out in front is a general decorating some brancardiers for bravery. Yesterday the town was bedecked with flags in honor of Roumania. Would hate to leave now, when things are looking up so. . . . .

While out at one of the postes de secours a couple of days ago, only about three hundred yards from the Boche lines, a man popped his head out of a trench and said in a Flatbush brogue, "Say, is it true, kid, de Dodgers are leadin' de League?" Think of meeting that 'way over here!

Sept. 3, 1916.

Yesterday Mr. Hill showed one of the new men over the sector, and there being a couple of postes I had not as yet seen myself, I went along with him. It was a ride that almost any American newspaper reporter would have given his eyes to be in on. Eight or nine miles riding took us right into the forest where the lines are. Everywhere were thousands and thousands of trenches —big ones, little ones, deep ones, all sorts. Big piles of logs, piles of barbed wire, iron posts and every imaginable thing for trench warfare were stored at different places, to be used as occasion demanded.

It seemed very unusual to go right into the middle of a dense wood and find hundreds and hundreds of men in every direction. . . . . While we were up there a crapouillot landed, not too far off, and gave me that same empty feeling that you always have when something goes off near you. . . . . The soldiers say that hand grenades are worse than regular shells. A shell you can always hear in time to drop flat on your face; and if you do that it has just about got to land on you to wound you. But when a hand grenade drops into

your trench there isn't a thing you can do. It explodes in three or four seconds, and if you haven't got a corner right near you all you can do is to throw yourself right on your face in front of it, and then you will be hit anyhow, but not so badly as though you were standing up. . . . . I find now that I can say almost anything I want to in French.

I think the last four months have been the most useful, and certainly the happiest that I have ever put in. And now that the Allies are slowly but surely gaining the upper hand things will be better and better with us. When Roumania came in all the town was decorated with flags. The soldiers all wore a decided smile. Every one now expects Greece to march . . . .

From time to time we get newspaper extracts from American Ambulance fellows, who have written to home papers. . . . . They ought not to do it. . . . . They hurt the Ambulance a lot by writing such truck. One of our own fellows did it, and altho better than the rest he couldn't help from running to "reign of terror" stuff. One of the fellows wrote about how "Mother's fair-haired boy was now a man." Judas! Judas!

My new car is a dandy; runs fast and stays in the middle of the road; 54 used to be in the gutter most of the time; in fact she rode better there than anywhere else. Have been playing quite a bit of chess lately. . . . . .The French in some ways are about fifty years behind us; housekeeping is one of them, at least in this part of the country. In a lot of ways I think they are 'way ahead of us; saving and patriotism, I think, could be mentioned. . . . . Another fellow and I have rented a piano at a dollar a month, and it is a great success. The other fellow that plays is crazy over opera, and plays Madame Butterfly all day long. Have been learning two Chopin waltzes myself. . . . . I guess the piano won't be for much longer, because we don't expect to be

in this quiet sector more than a little while. . . . .Am reading Carlyle's "Heroes and Hero Worship"; great stuff. . . . .

Saturday, Sept. 16, 1916.

About ten days ago my permission papers came, and, much to my surprise, I was allowed to go to Italy. . . . . I slept on the train two nights, not in a sleeper. The first night it was all right, ... but the second was a terror. At Genoa I was all alone, but there a tremendous woman, with four small children, two maids and a dog, fought their way in. It wasn't so bad as long as there was daylight, but when night came things began to move. La Colosse stretched out on one seat, occupying it once and a half. Two kids slept somewhere behind her, but were lost to view. I saw there wasn't going to be any sleeping, so I offered to leave. She, however, insisted on my staying, as she didn't want to feel that she was inconveniencing me. Well, in spite of all my protests she insisted that the two maids sleep on the floor, between the two seats. Having seen three soldiers spit there all the afternoon, I couldn't imagine their being comfortably fixed. The other two kids were stretched out on my seat, while I sat upright in a corner and wished I was dead. The dog disappeared under a seat and wasn't seen again. Of course, everything was hermetically sealed, and the maids were no roses.

Well, I was so tired that in an hour or so I dozed off. I was awakened by seeing a scuffle at the door, and a fat Italian priest sank back onto the platform, while his two suitcases were thrown after him. He had opened the door, and, it being pitch black, he had dropped his suitcases on the maids and then had walked on them. They woke up in a rage, and then followed what I've already described.

It took another half-hour for me to calm down and

to doze again. I don't know how long it lasted this time, but I awoke while a fight was going on between two of the kids. The dog appeared for the first time in four hours, and barked like Spike. It ended in tears, and things were quiet again. I was near the ragged edge by this time and had it out in the corridor. Immediately Madame had the two maids out after me, who followed me to the end of the car, and, after an argument, partly French, Italian and English, dragged me back and sat me down.

That was not all. I had managed to stretch out a bit, and really tore off two hours of perspiring sleep. This time I was awakened by sharp, repeated blows on my head. One of the little girls had evidently waked up, very much frightened at feeling my head on her feet. Having her shoes on, she immediately kicked out in all directions, touching me every other blow. As she had heels, I have two bumps on my head this minute. I didn't say a word, but when it was quiet again I used strategy and sneaked out like a thief into the corridor, where I stood up the rest of the night. Needless to say, the funny part of it all didn't strike me till a couple of days afterwards.

A long day it was from Turin to Rome, which, after Paris, appeared a very dazzling city. Spent all day long in the Forum and Coliseum. You can be sure it was all the pleasanter for being able to think that you and father had been in the same places many times. In the evening I went around to the Martini's. I didn't tell them I was coming, as I knew they'd be all the gladder to see me if I turned up unexpectedly. They are all simply fine. Cousin Julie and the girls are all *very* pretty. Enrico is an awfully nice little kid. Cousin Giulio is a peach; reminded me a lot of home. He looked all of a general, and I felt very proud to be related to him. They are all the nicest bunch I've ever

met. They did everything for me and made me feel entirely at home. . . . .

I took two days to go up to Siena to see Auntie Kay. I hadn't told her either that I was coming. When I appeared in her room she almost passed out from surprise. Of course she was awfully happy to see me, and we had a long, long talk about everything. . . . . Came back to Rome and had another day with the Martinis. . . . . It was from beginning to end a very happy and homelike affair. . . . . Am now back at work again and am very happy to be here. . . . . The poet Masefield appeared in the section and turned out to be a very nice fellow.

[From a letter of C. A. G. we get the following incident of this trip to Siena. As he was leaving for Rome, she and Coleman were upon the R. R. platform, which was filled with Italian soldiers. They noticed with curiosity his uniform, different from theirs. After a time several of the older men came up, and soon there was a group of 40 or 50 around them. They asked him to what branch of the service he belonged. When he said "American Ambulance" every cap was lifted and a murmur went around; and when they parted from him they gave him, a boy of 20, and through him, America, the military salute.

The following is from a letter of C. A. G., dated Nov. 24, 1916: "I know just how you feel about Coleman. The tears come every time I think of him, and they are tears of happiness and appreciation. I've seen him, you know, later than you have, and appreciate how he has grown, mentally and spiritually. He is filled with a purpose that you feel. Strangers felt it, and spoke of it. He is just the same bright, boyish, happy Coey, so affectionate and winning, and yet with a purpose that shows underneath it all. I felt I could lean on him."]

VII.

DECISION NOT TO GO HOME

Paris, Sept. 22, 1916.

I have now been with the American Ambulance almost five months, and I am sure that you've all been wondering what I am going to do. I have noticed that your letters have all kept carefully away from the subject of my homecoming, and it is very brave of you, for I know that you refrain from saying anything about it just in order that I may feel at perfect liberty to decide for myself. I am not blind to the fact that you would all be very happy to see me home this fall. And in view of that I want to explain my decision to remain through the winter, and make you understand that my motive is not selfishness.

I do not think I need explain my feeling of love and patriotism for France at any greater length. You must know it by my letters; I must have reiterated it many times. You are all angry against Germany, and you are 3,000 miles away from it. I have had the privilege of being in it, and doing what I can. I have carried young wounded boys for miles and miles, and a few of them have died in my car. Being so near to it, and seeing the suffering of all, perhaps you can appreciate my intense desire to stay on and do my part, which seems so little when I see poor, uneducated soldiers give and do so much.

By staying over I cause five of you a lot of worry—and do not think that I do not realize it. It has made me heart-sick many, many, times. . . . . It isn't often that I write like this, but once in a while you write what you feel in your heart. In addition to the humanity side of it, you can well believe that I am glad to be able to do something which contributes to the overthrow of Germany. . . . .

And now I'll tell you what we are about to do. . . . . One morning I was awakened by, "Get right up, B. B., and pack; we leave at 10:30." We were all glad, because it is always pleasant to change. At 10:30 we were all ready to go, when the Médecin Major rushed up in his car, jumped out and said, "I am very sorry to hear you are leaving us; it is quite a blow to me." He spoke to us for about three or four minutes, and then shook hands with us all, with real tears in his eyes. Five or ten minutes later another grey car rushed into town, and the chief of staff appeared. He was a big-bug, and we all felt very proud to have a good-bye from him. Not more than ten minutes after that another big grey car landed in town, and out jumped a little man in an old muddy uniform and with a crooked old cane. It was the general himself. He said everything the others had said and wished us the best of luck. It was a great send-off for us, and when he left we all lined up in the gutter and saluted as his car went by. We ourselves left a few minutes later, with all the townspeople out, waving us good-bye. I think the French will remember the American Ambulance. . . . . We were going to Paris. . . . .

For a hundred kilometres or more we followed the battlefield of the Marne,* and we didn't go a hundred yards or so without seeing a grave here, or a group there, some French, some German. . . . .And to think that the French at that time, with practically no ammunition, pushed back an army twice as great, an average of 50 kilometres! All the French soldiers, speaking of it, say it was a miracle. . . . . .

Last night we arrived, about seven o'clock, at St. Cloud, where we parked our cars. We came into Paris to sleep at the Ambulance Headquarters, and today we learned that we're going to Salonique. It means signing

*Diary says by Toul, St. Dizier, Sézanne, Vitry, La Fère-Champenoise, and Tournan; the back road to Paris.

up for six months more, but only one who has been asked has refused to go. It is a picked section, and the experience will be a wonderful thing. It is a fine compliment to the American Ambulance that we've been asked to go down there. . . . . It will feel more or less like leaving home to leave France, but, at any rate, we'll be with the French soldiers as ever. . . . . Everything looks bright.

Paris, Oct. 6, 1916.

It was over a week ago that I wrote you telling you that we were going to Salonique the next day. . . . . Our work will be up in the mountains. . . . . That is the particular virtue of the Fords, that they can work in the most mountainous country, and on the most rotten roads, whereas the other big ambulances which the French use are very slow, cumbersome, and burn a great deal of gas. . . . .

I look upon Verdun with a sense of awe. . . . . It was such a big thing, that at the time I couldn't realize all of what I was seeing, and as I think it over it becomes more and more vivid to me. Some day I'll have to write it all up. Now it seems a very romantic thing to me, but while I was working there I divided my time between sleep and hard work, and more or less fear. I'm looking forward to the day when we'll all be sitting around the fire and I can tell you all about it. . . . .

I notice that in your last letter you say, "Fellows that have been over say that very few men can stand the strain more than six months." . . . . Never have I felt sick since I have been here, and never have I had any nerve breaks. . . . . This is not a strain. How can it be when there is always something new and interesting to look at, and a lot of more or less pleasurable excitement? . . . . This nervous strain stuff is a bunch of bunk. . . . .

VIII

MARSEILLES.

Marseilles, Tuesday, Oct. 17, 1916.

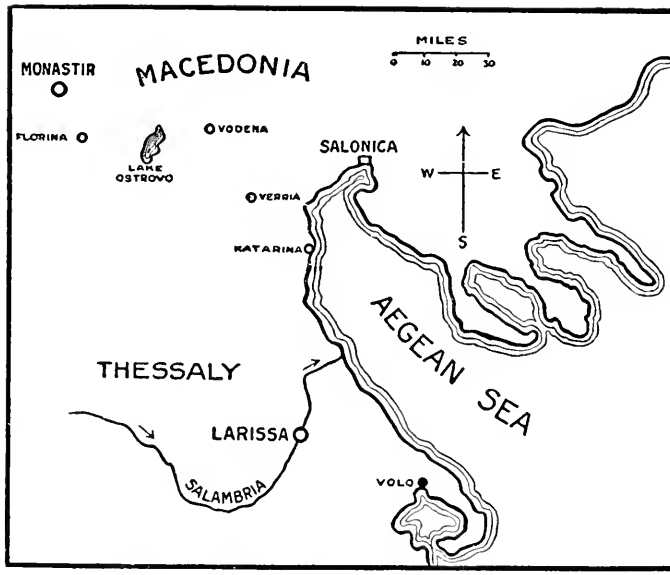
We left Paris last Thursday evening. . . . . It being a freight train, there was a great deal of jerking forward a mile, and then a sudden backing for two miles, and the engine blowing off steam every ten minutes or so. Everybody smoked all the time, and there wasn't much sleeping in our compartment, nor any of the others, I guess. It didn't take long for a strong body smell to ooze into all the corners and to outreek the tobacco. Anyhow it was a lot of fun, and everybody enjoyed it. It took us 36 hours to get to Marseilles, where we landed Saturday morning. The second night I and another fellow took our blankets out on a freight car and slept there, and slept soundly, too. . . . .

Marseilles is a great place. You see signs of the war everywhere here, but from an entirely different viewpoint. Besides the ordinary Paris mixture of French and English soldiers of all sorts, down here we see dirty Hindoos stalking around in their turbans and sashes; Chinks in a sort of yellowish-green uniform, with their plate-shaped hats; thousands of Coons walking in the middle of the streets, usually holding each other's hands; and once in a while an Arab. . . . . It's a lot of fun to to go down along the water front and watch the Coons working. Unless someone is at them all the time, they amble off peacefully in droves and doze off standing up. It seems awfully unreal to hear Smokes speaking French. . . . . A bunch of German prisoners happened to go by a troop of Smokes; immediately every nigger got out a long knife, and waved it at them, each one shouting at the top of his lungs. . . . .

Not much progress with my Russian as yet. . . . . It looks like an impossible language. . . . . Don't take on any additional worry on account of Salonique. Everybody is looking forward to it very much; and they are taking *all* precautions against anything, which I'll explain when I get home. . . . . Add "Armée d'Orient" to my address. . . . . Please send accounts of all Yale football games. Too bad about the sick tree in the back yard.

Marseilles, Friday, Oct. 20, 1916.

We're off this afternoon, with 800 Chinks and 200 Coons as ballast. The tub we are going in has a fighting prow like the *Mesaba*. The Chinks marched through town this morning, barefoot, and as we all sleep in one big hold in little beds, three deep, I suppose we'll suffer for those feet tonight. . . . . Everybody's starting off in good health. . . . . Please don't forget the can of cube. It looks like a million dollars over here. . . . . We've got a fine bunch of fellows in our section, 16 of our old section and 10 others picked from other sections. I was awfully glad to see Don Armour show up; he stood next to me on the Glee Club last year. Have just finished reading "Pickwick" in French. Enjoyed it so much that I am taking down with me "Oliver Twist," "Our Mutual Friend," "Bleak House," and "David Copperfield," all in French, too.



Where he was in Macedonia and Thessaly

Vodena: the old Greek Edessa, the ancient capital of the kingdom of Macedonia, 400 B. C.

Salonica: the Thessalonica of the Bible, where St. Paul preached; an important city as far back as 300 B. C.

Larissa: once the capital of the Pelasgi, prior to their conquest by the Macedonian kings.

Salambria, (river): the ancient Peneus, the chief river of Thessaly. Between Larissa and the Sea, it flows through the beautiful vale of Tempe, so celebrated in ancient poetry.

Volo: on the site of the port from which the legendary Argonauts sailed.

Negocani: near Monastir.

Sakulevo: near Monastir.

IX

ARRIVAL AT SALONICA.

Nov. 1, 1916.

We arrived in Salonique safely day before yesterday. Our voyage over was a very interesting one. The boat was filled with Chinamen, and the only accommodations were 800 bunks down in the hold, six deep, with 2½ feet between them *i. e.*, up and down, but no distance between them sidewise. We tried it down there the first night while the air was still fresh, but about four in the morning we all crawled out on deck, where we've slept every night since. . . . . Most of the Frenchmen on board were scared until the moment they put foot on land. As a matter of fact, we didn't sight one (sousmarin) at any time, altho there were always six or seven men watching. The last three days the Captain had eight of us watching at a time, two on the bridge, two on the deck, two at the bow, and two at the stern. The watches were three hours long and very tiresome. I had some bad luck, and drew all my watches from 11 P. M. to 2 A. M. . . . .

Before telling about the interesting things here I want to write about the little Chinks. Aside from their filth, they were awfully nice little fellows. To hear all of them talking in the hold together sounded like a large army of chickens, while their piping little laughs sounded like so many squirrels. They were fed in squads, one man going to the kitchen with a large bowl, which was filled with a greasy, greenish soup. Around this bowl the squad squatted in a circle. Each one threw large chunks of bread into the bowl, which he later fished out with his hand. On one particular day they all shaved each

other. Each hair they cut off their faces with a pocket knife. One of them had a straight razor, but used it dry. They were all more or less tattooed, and most of it was pretty fantastic work. We understood that most of them were volunteers. We felt very sorry for them because they did not know what they were going to. However, I don't believe they are to be used at the front, but in the rear as sentries, guards and longshoremen.

They never acted other than as little children, playing little tricks with each other all day long. They showed no earnest of a yellow peril. A couple of them died on the way, and the bodies were boxed and thrown overboard, and six buglers played as the bodies disappeared. Not a trace of sorrow could I see in any of the Annamites' faces. In fact, right up to the minute before, they were all squatted on deck, playing with their soup. We couldn't understand such indifference. . . . .

Of the military side of Salonique I think I had better say nothing, as we have been specially cautioned in that respect. It is more than cosmopolitan, more like a Babel. Signs are written in every language, and the Greek is rather in the minority. Such a mixture of languages and uniforms was far beyond anything I had anticipated. . . . . From the moment we landed we could see we were in the Orient. A trip through the little winding streets is like a chapter from the Arabian Nights. Bazars, veiled ladies, sombre old priests with stovepipe hats (without the brim), squalid children, a respectable amount of filth, bead sellers, donkeys loaded down on each side and a black smoke sitting on their necks—it has all the earmarks of Asia. As we left the ship an old dirty Greek formed us in fours and marched us off to a concentration field, where we waited six hours for something to happen. Luckily, it was right on an important crossroads and there was something new to look at

every minute. Three men fights and two dog took place. One of the latter almost broke up a funeral, which got mixed up in a convoy of two-ton trucks. On the corner stood not one cop but five, one for each race; and they have an awfully hard time. . . . .

Everybody is well and happy except the French cook. who can't reconcile Oriental products to his French menu. . . . . As all my underwear is in my car, which hasn't arrived as yet, I turned my stuff inside out today and feel like Sunday morning. Learned the Greek alphabet this morning. . . . .

Nov. 12, 1916.

I am doing my best at trying to scratch out a little Greek; learned ten words yesterday, tried them on a little bootblack and not one of them got across. He lost a tip. It doesn't look like a very potent language to me anyhow. As someone said, trying to read it is like trying to decipher a blotter. . . . .Saw Venizelos yesterday for the first time. He looked like a very kindly old gentleman. Everybody saluted him. . . . . I've taken walk after walk through Salonique and never have I seen such a queer place. The Turkish quarter is particularly interesting. The houses are all little two-storied affairs, with lots of dormer windows. A great many are painted light blue. which makes it very pretty. However, it is mostly spoiled by the condition of the streets, which are littered up with garbage. . . . .

Nov. 18, 1916.

The ship bringing our cars just turned up at the dock a few days ago, and ever since then we have been down there, smashing crates with pickaxe and crowbar. . . . . Our cook is a fine one, and makes most anything, (most anything being largely beans,) taste good. We call him

the "roi des cuistros," "cuistro" being the French soldiers' abbreviation for cook. . . . .

We have just had a very sad accident in the Section, and we all feel very depressed over it. Eddie Sortwell [Harvard, '10] was crossing the main street a few evenings ago, down-town, when a big staff car came along and hit him squarely on the head. The car picked him up and took him to the nearest hospital, but he never recovered consciousness and died the next night. What a blow this will be to his family! The funeral was very quiet, but very impressive. It was held in a special little wooden chapel, right in the midst of a military cemetery. Around the edge of the room stood about 25 soldiers with casques and fixed bayonets. We stood in a half circle around the coffin while a French protestant chaplain conducted the service. The coffin was covered with a French flag, which in turn was covered with the Stars and Stripes. . . . . It all seemed almost impossible to us. Ed was always good-natured, full of fun, and a friend to every one.

It does now really seem certain that we will be off for the front in a few days. . . . . Chickens, dogs and cats are up all night long, and one morning I got up at four, and dispersed a drove of hogs which were starting to push in the tent. . . . . While I was writing the above a French soldier came into this little inn (right next our camp) and engaged me in a half-hour conversation on the war, ... especially what they think of the war in the United States. He told me that he was wounded twice, once in Belgium, and once in Champagne. He insisted on stripping to the waist and showing me the wounds. One was a three-inch bayonet scar, right in the stomach. They are all very proud of their wounds. . . . .

X

UP TO THE MOUNTAINS

Dec. 2, 1916.

I haven't written you for two weeks, because since we left Salonique no mail has gone back from us. From Nov. 21 to today makes a strange history for me. On that day, at 5 in the morning, we were up, pulling down our six round little tents and packing them into our cars, and by six we were off in a long convoy, with all our headlights going, for it was still dark. . . . . Squads of Boches and Greeks were being marched, in herds, out to work on the roads. Nigger troops, black as coal, were just starting out on the long march to the front; Chinamen were doing sentry duty at different points, and the heavy camions, by the hundreds, were just starting the rumble which you are never out of sound of. A few ox teams were coming into town with mats made of rushes for a load, and were invariably in the way. A great many cemeteries—Greek, English, Serb and French—were to be seen near the city. But it wasn't long before this was far behind, and we were out on a fine road across the marsh, with the sun coming up behind the mountains. . . . . You must remember that all this part of Macedonia is really Turkish, as the Greeks have only had it for four years. As a result the inhabitants stared at us with a cold Asiatic eye as we went tearing through their muddy streets and sprinkled their streets with American Ambulance mud.

A couple of more hours and we got to the foot of our first hill. Here we found a long line of heavily loaded camions waiting their turn for the Jeffery tractors to pull them up. Our little match boxes got up without

any trouble at all. . . . .Up to this point it had been a very pleasant, interesting day, all play; but soon we were to experience the first balk of the Balkans. . . . . Two more rear axles went. . . . . I remember one place where a bunch of 30 or 40 Bulgars were working, and they had to come to the rescue and push each car over the worst place. The Bulgars were guarded by Senegalese Coons, and on many of the camions that staggered by were little yellow Chinks. So you can see that down here it is like the wandering of nations. After this we skirted a large lake [Ostrovo], where there were many English and Scottish hospitals. . . . . Have never before seen such a combination of steep hills and bad roads. By this time our convoy had diminished from 25 to 13. . . . . We thought that we were just about through the woods when a long hill, steeper than ever, loomed up, just as it was getting dark. Not one car could make it. So the only thing to do was to get 8 or 10 on each car, and push as hard as we could for 200 yards over the steepest part. All this on no dinner. . . . . When we finally came out on large plain we stopped, and as there was nothing to eat or drink, we all climbed into stretchers and went to sleep. . . . . [Banica].

On the fourth day after leaving Salonique we were off again and proceeded 20 more kilometres north, where we came upon the town which was our temporary destination, and where we have been ever since [Sakulevo]. . . . . We are not yet working at the front, but are near enough so that we can see the flashing on the hills, and plainly hear the cannons. What we miss most of all are the newspapers. . . . .The other day I carried two Coons and one Chinaman inside, while a Frenchman rode with me on the seat in front. The two Coons and the Annamite were not wounded, but sick, so that they were still pretty lively and managed to start an argument inside. . . . . Am enjoying Dickens as usual, and be-

sides that am doing quite a bit of solid reading in Shakespeare, Ruskin and Carlyle. We are pretty much ashamed of the United States' stand. . . . .

A few days ago thousands of Russian soldiers marched up the road and built an enormous camp across the river from us, not 200 yards away. They were fine looking men and looked like fine soldiers, too. This was the first time that I had seen war as you usually think of it, *i. e.,* large armies marching around, and hundreds of camp fires burning. About seven o'clock the first night we heard a cornet from over there, and then followed a great burst of song in a short monotone chant. All we could see was a bluish smoke, and many, many camp fires; and out of it came this great burst of song, thousands singing at once. You can't imagine how impressive it was. It stopped for a moment; then another cornet, and then came the national anthem. Every one of us just stood in awe. It was simply beautiful. They do it every night at seven, and we are out there listening, every one of us.

My work isn't in it with the stuff Ruskin Watts is doing [aviation], but, all the same, I wouldn't want to be doing anything else. . . . .

Dec. 10, 1916.

We are still at a place ten miles from the lines, doing evacuation work back to the railroad. . . . . The tents are new and strong, but after the past week they all leak, as a rule, right over one's head. . . . . This morning it dawned bright and clear, and a more beautiful sunrise could not be imagined. In the mountains there were still great piles of clouds, and the reflections from these on the snow-tips made a variety of colors that completely stumped me. . . . . Our menu is: Monday, beans and meat for lunch and supper; Tuesday, rice and less meat; Wednesday, lentils and meat; Thursday, maca-

roni and less meat, etc., *ad infinitum*. . . . .If this diet worried us a bit I wouldn't write about it; but as it is every one gets plenty to eat, and every one is well, thriving and contented. . . . .

Dec. 11, 1916.

Just got back from another long roll. It takes five hours to make the round trip. . . . . We notice a lot of Scottish women driving ambulances down here. They are quite a famous organization, as they followed the Serbian army in the retreat. As mechanics we can't hand them much. One of the fellows said he saw three of their cars lined up in the gutter, while three of them tried to put on a tire. He came to their rescue and put it on. He said that in the distance he couldn't make out whether they were using hairpins or button hooks. . . . . This afternoon I came upon three new, entirely untouched shrapnel 75s. They are still untouched, as I saw no use in examining them too closely. Trenches and battery emplacements you can see every hundred yards or so. . . . .

What a terrible failure Roumania has been. We have just received word that Bucharest has fallen. . . . . We've also heard that Greece has declared war on Italy, France and England. We believe the news about Greece to be impossible; but granted that, Germany seems to be farther from being crushed than ever; in fact, her star hasn't stopped rising. . . . . Our French lieutenant almost had tears in his eyes as he spoke of the German successes in Roumania. . . . .

XI

MONASTIR

Dec. 18, 1916. [*Monastir*]

We have moved again, and are now working pretty steadily. We are quartered in a very comfortable double house—of doubtful extraction—since yesterday morning. As soon as we appeared, millions of little kids gathered around our cars, anxious to watch and to touch everything. When we asked them what nationality they were, almost invariably they replied, "Israelite."

We work almost all the way back to our last place, which makes a ride of almost 25 kilometres each way. Fortunately the road is very smooth, so we really fly along, as if we were in a civilized country. On the bad roads the big camions pass us again and again, but here a camion hasn't a chance with us.

. . . . . The wounded are of all nations, though principally French, with Russians, Serbs and Coons mixed in. We get them in a Mohammedan mosque, which, if a sad sight, is certainly a very interesting one. Beds of straw fill all the floor space, and upon the walls (pure white) are queer black and white signs, possibly commandments, written in Turkish, and looking like so much shorthand. At the far end is a little shrine set into the wall, whose principal asset is the many colors used, for now that seems to be the only thing I remember about it. At the top of a steep and straight flight of stairs is a cushioned seat, apparently for the use of high dignitaries. The effect of it was very step-laddery. The whole thing was lighted up by oil lamps swung on long chains from the ceiling, which made the inside very mystical. In

this country the Arabian Nights are always in your mind. . . . .

About the only thing that can be bought in the city are "Bastos" cigarettes. In buying a package today I received in change one Serbian piece, two French francs, one Austria-Hungary, one German mark, one Greek, one Bulgar (refused on advice of fellow I was with but without success) and two unidentified nondescripts. The only thing I am sure about is that I was stuck. . . . .

Opposite our house is a mosque, whose minaret almost looks into our garret window. Behind that is a big chimney, with an enormous stork's nest resting on it. I've watched that nest considerably, but have never seen any scrawny necks stuck out for food. If I could only see one stork, standing on one leg, on the edge of it; without any other object, the trip would have been worth while.

Yesterday I rolled 165 kilometers, which was quite unusual. Coming back, it was quite dark, and before I got into the city I knew I would be completely lost, as we have to wind a mile in and out among the little streets before getting into our cantonment. Of course, up here all lights must be out, so I knew it was quite hopeless. For two hours I wound in and out, stopping and turning around and then off again. Not a chance. Every street ended in a mosque, and they all were twins with the one across the way from us. All the houses looked alike, blue paint, and little dormer windows in the second (top) story. I finally decided that it was quite hopeless; and finding myself up a little alley, with a mule tied to a post at the end of it (and a mosque), I decided to wait for somebody to come along. Nobody else had been up to our place but once, so I thought that most everybody would be in the same fix as I. I hadn't been there five minutes before I heard some awful swearing up at the other end of the alley, and a minute later two

ambulances came down upon me as I was smoking peacefully on the front seat. They stopped (they couldn't have gone by had they tried), and said, "What are you doing here?" I said, "Nothing. What are you?" They replied, "D—— if I know." So we went off again on excursions for half an hour without any result, but an appreciable souring of dispositions. Well, it couldn't go on forever, and by happening on a gendarme who knew the key to the maze, we finally got home after picking up three other ambulances in the most surprising places. . . . .

Dec. 19, 1916.

Just got back from another roll. . . . . No excitement, and road practically empty, so made the trip very fast. Great relief not to have the wounded yelling all the time, as they did on the old trip.

A crowd of Jewesses clustered around me to get some kerosene for their lamps when I got back. I thought there was a fighting chance of getting rid of them if I gave them a little; so I filled one small lamp and then firmly locked up the rest. The poor woman who got the oil was woman-handled severely, and lost her oil, and I managed to escape during the riot. . . . .

For the first time in two months we are wearing steel helmets. . . . . We hear rumors of peace propositions from the Kaiser, but don't believe anything will come of them. There was a wonderful reply to them by the French offensive in the Woevre. . . . .My admiration for the French increases day by day.

Dec. 22, 1916 (diary).

Quite a bit of excitement during the last few days. Shells have been dropping all around the city, and wearing casques has become quite popular. . . . . Although

the Allies have been in Monastir for over three weeks, their position seems very precarious.

Dec. 23, 1916 (diary).

Started out for a walk with Viv.* and Fiske†. . . . . We heard whistle after whistle, and for eight minutes they went over to the centre of the town. . . . . In a minute a great black smoke came up from the centre of the city. When it was over we went down to see the extent of the damage. All along the main street it was littered with bricks, houses were destroyed, and the poor *civiles* in droves were sneaking from door to door, making their escape to another part of the city. . . . . In one mess of a yard some little children were crying, while one had gone crazy, and was actually frothing at the mouth. We learned that five children had been killed. . . . . In that very yard we saw some very ghastly humor when an energetic little man handed out a card saying, "James Georges, Manufacturer of Artificial Limbs, Company."

Dec. 30, 1916.

. . . . .Every day since Christmas the town has been bombarded at least once. . . . . One little piece dropped at my feet, which will make a good souvenir. . . . . Up at the cantonment one had landed right beside our cars.

Jan. 6, 1917.

Been an awful gap in the mails lately. Christmas box heralded, but hasn't yet arrived. Now we are out of town again, and in the midst of a big field twenty

*Cornelius Winant, afterward taken prisoner, but escaped.
†Later killed in the war.

miles long by forty wide. We are living in a good-sized mud-brick house (no windows) [Negocani]. All this territory was the scene of many fierce battles of about two months ago, and I never before have seen such a wealth of interesting material. . . . . Shells, guns, bayonets, casques, and bullets by the thousands can be picked up. Hand grenades are everywhere. . . . . Big shell holes, some of them twelve feet wide, are to be seen on either hand. This morning I must have carted home at least fifteen pounds of cold iron.

Yesterday the Boches brought down a French observation ballon *(saucisse)*. We saw the blazing envelope fall to the ground, and right in the midst of the black smoke we saw a tiny white speck descending ever so slowly, so we knew that the Frenchman had escaped in his parachute.

Our work goes on as usual. We have to get up at six in the morning to get up into town [Monastir] before daylight, and get out again with the wounded. It is a beautiful ride up and back on a clear day. From a distance you can just see the white minarets sticking up against the mountainside in the very first glimmerings of daylight. Coming back, the sunrise over the mountains is a gorgeous thing, even more bright than the coloring you usually have in mind when thinking of the Orient. Networks of deserted trenches stretch away across the swamp. They look very desolate and cruel, being filled with water right up to the brink.

Soldiers, mules, autos, and guns are constantly moving ahead, and all grumble when told to get out of the way, for it means giving up the one good place, to risk a "panne" in the mud, just to let a Ford go by. Even here the Ford is getting its unenviable reputation for infesting all roads. . . . . Whenever anyone wants some firewood he knocks down a house and carts off what he

likes. If he knocked it down, no one else can cart the wood off. This is the only property right.

My last bath was in town, about eight days ago, in a sort of mausoleum. It was a stone dungeon, with three stone bowls standing against the walls. Into the bowls flowed a thin stream of lukewarm water from as many faucets. You dished the water over yourself by means of an old copper dish. . . . . There is not one honest man in Florina. They cheat you on change, and charge you double the price. The only way to get along is to ask the price, give him half, and walk off with the thing, threatening to kill him if he protests. Even the most gentle ones in the section get quite ferocious over there. . . . .

A couple of evenings ago up in Monastir a couple of us played bridge with our lieutenant and a captain of mitrailleuses. It was quite a trial to try to play only tolerably badly, to keep up a conversation in French, and to use cards with R D and V on them for Kink, Queen and Jack. Some French-American Church in Paris has sent us down quite a bit of honey and candy, which has helped out considerably. Gee whiz! The fleas!

Jan. 20, 1917.

And now for a little news concerning myself. We were told this morning to clean up everything in the cantonment and to dress up, for a visit from our Médecin Divisionnaire was expected, and he was death on dirt and souvenirs. So we swept out, and stuck all the shot and shell, grenades, shrapnel, bayonets and guns, which have been accumulating steadily, under the beds. After that we dressed up. For me "dressing up" meant simply putting on my uniform, for I don't believe I have had more than the pants of it on for two months, as I usually wear wooden shoes, a Turkish fez, and numer-

ous sweaters, instead of the réglementaire outfit; for in this country it doesn't matter much what you wear.

Well, when the Divisionnaire came, our lieutenant called four of us into the office, Roddy Montgomery, John Munroe, Imbrie, and myself. We lined up against the wall, and felt like so many prisoners in the dock until the Médecin Divisionnaire began to speak. And what do you think it was for? The croix de guerre. He was very friendly and made an awfully nice little speech, saying that at first it had been intended to cite us to the order of the "Service de Santé," but that, seeing we had all done the campaigns of Verdun, Lorraine, Pont-à-Mousson, and Monastir, he had not thought that sufficient honor (though it was), and therefore we were to be cited to the order of the 57th division; which means that we get a silver star on the ribbon of the cross instead of a bronze one. . . . . As soon as I get the words of the citation itself I will send it over. They are always great, bombastic things, so you must not take it as being too personal. They were very nice ones, though. . . . .

Was very much touched to hear about the flag from the Rifle Club. It really seems too much of an honor for the stuff I am doing, which looks quite big from over there, but which now seems the regular, natural life over here, where everybody's in it some way or another.

Jan. 25, 1917.

Had to go over to the Serbian front yesterday, and there I saw one of the Scottish women, the first civilized woman I've seen in two months or more. This one was over to feed Serbian kids who had nobody at all to look after them, and used to hang around the army, picking up what scraps they could find. There must have been 150 of them waiting to be fed. . . . . Most of the

wounded we carry now are not wounded, but have frozen feet. . . . . Sometimes we carry as many as fifty a morning, just frozen Coons. They say that in hot weather, when nobody else dares to stir, the Coons are the best fighters anywhere. . . . . Now they are putting most of them on the roads, where they can move around and keep warm. They are a happy bunch, and no matter what they are doing they always sing, and always in rhythm. Often we pass twenty or so of them, swinging back and forth across the road together, each with a big, heavy iron pounder, and every one of them shouting at the top of his voice. . . . .

Am awfully worried about the outcome of the war. If the Allies are to win it, England has got to come through with something big. Not that the Somme wasn't something tremendous in itself, but it will take just about two more Sommes to put Germany under. . . . .

XII

WINTER ON THE BALKAN FRONT

Jan. 29, 1917.

Am sitting up in bed with an overcoat on. . . . During the last two weeks it has been ever so much colder. . . . . With a little oil stove going in the middle of the room and seven or eight lanterns helping it along—to say nothing of eight or ten smelling Americans—we create what we call a fine "atmosphere" or "air-pocket." . . . .

We are now doing more work than at any time since Verdun, and it is never tiresome. The greater part of the cases are frozen feet, and it must be a terrible experience. When we are so snug and warm in our house, and it is driving sleet and snow outside, we realize what a soft job we've got compared with the poor soldiers up in the mountains, and out on the marshes, each man with one blanket, while we've got at least four and a folding bed. How they stand the exposure, I don't see; but those we meet on the road seem to be just as nonchalant about the weather as they were in midsummer. Gee! They are wonderful! Not a man who doesn't want the war to end. "But it must end with our victory: nous les poursuivrons jusqu'au bout." There's France! . . . .

I carried this morning a French doctor, who worked with the Scottish women at one of the hospitals. He told me that nine out of ten of them were suffragettes (militant), and that the reason that they were down here was, so that after the war they could use this experience as political capital. He said that it was their scheme to be as much like men as possible. One of them

tried—violently—to get into the Serb army as a soldier. . . . .

I look forward to "Bleak House" every evening, and if father were reading it out loud at home, with you dozing off in the yellow rocker, and me stretched out on the floor, I would enjoy it almost as much as the first time. This morning I shaved and washed everything down to the shoulders, the first time in some weeks. Sensation was so pleasant that I am going to do it again soon; but not too frequently, as the sensation would be spoiled. . . . . Fleas come and go, but are usually within hearing distance. Keating's Instanteous Killer draws them on like a magnet. Am feeling fine, and the dirt and bugs add to the effect, if anything.

Mail service has become temperamental again, so home seems a few more thousand miles away this week. Am always thinking of you. . . . .

Feb. 5, 1917.

Today comes the news, diplomatic relations with Germany broken, two cruisers seized, etc. I imagine that you and other mothers are worried at the possibilities of such an action, but I can only hope that the United States will do all in her power to help the Allies. . . . . That submarine note was one that could only have been written and determined upon by Germans. . . . .No, mother, they have got to be beaten to such a state that the Allies can impose what terms of peace they choose; and, late as it is, the United States could establish itself in the eyes of the world, if we could come in on the side of the right. In spite of all the horrors of a war, it would be worth while. . . . . Do you remember the speech of the German Chancellor not so long since in which he said, "Any German who would not consent to use every possible means to defeat our enemy deserves

to be hung." He speaks for Germany, and that's the race which the Allies are trying to beat.

Our work is getting quite heavy, as we are taking on more and more postes de secours. . . . . It's awfully cold, getting up at half past five in the morning, and then cranking a car which absolutely refuses to start after fifteen minutes of steady turning. . . . .A few days ago I had to take a 120-kilometre run over the mountains. . . . . Sleet the whole way, and the mud so deep that the road looked like a perfectly smooth pool of mud. But underneath this smooth coating were the most awful bumps, which racked you as much as the car. . . . .Have come to the conclusion that the only good things in this country are the sunrises and sunsets. The mountains are all covered with snow, and on the early morning runs we see the whole sunrise; and the colors are indeed very, very beautiful. Once in a while, if we are a little late, the minarets at Monastir show up wonderfully. . . . .

Feb. 13, 1917.

Of course, the big thing with us is still the rupture of diplomatic relations, and you can imagine we are anxiously awaiting the sequel. If we should declare war, and there was to be a call for volunteers, every one of us would beat it for home. . . . . But in the event of war, no matter what policy we should pursue, I know I should want to take a more vital part in it than driving an ambulance. News is very meagre, being mostly glaring lies one day and official denials the next. Most of it we can discount beforehand. For instance, the blowing up of all German ships in New York Harbor, and the blowing up of a great part of the Panama Canal. Such rumors are wildly distorted by the time they reach Salonique, but after they start out on the road over the mountains and are passed around by English, French,

Senegalese, Chinks and Serbs you can imagine what startling forms they have when we hear them. . . . .

Another event of importance was the arrival of the fruit cake on Feb. 11. The package was mangled and lop-eared, but the cake was intact and was a fine treat. I got a piece of it before the mob scene began. Knew she'd get here in the end and refused to be discouraged. . . . .

Perhaps over in America you can't realize exactly what the soldiers in the trenches think of the United States. The opinion is not high, and all they can say of our country is, "Ah! Les Américains ne voulent pas la guerre; ils s'enrichissent bien maintenant." Of course they don't realize how few people are getting rich; they don't realize much of anything after some twenty-nine months of mud, bad food and sickness. Oh! How I wish the United States would come in and turn the tide the other way!

A soldier's life is a terrible, terrible thing; not only on account of the suffering they undergo, but because it distorts, perhaps permanently, their views of life and people. They become what the French call "abrutis"; which fits better than any English word. When we are cold all day long in a fairly good house, nicely out of danger, we often wonder what it must be, out on the lines, where rain fills the trenches, and all sleep on the ground with just one blanket. The thing that made me cringe the most for the United States, was the French papers' comment on Wilson's campaign slogan, "He kept us out of war!" I would give anything if we could only come in now and do our best to win for the Allies.

That Verdun article of mine has been lying peacefully asleep for some two weeks, for our work has just about doubled, and what time we are not rolling we have to keep at the cars. Yesterday I worked from 5:30 A. M. to 4:30 P. M., just carrying wounded, and then I had to

go all over the car, greasing and tightening. Going up to Monastir there was a beautiful moon, shining wonderfully on the snow-clad mountains in the west. In front of us every once in a while a beautiful rocket would flare up and hang just over the snow-covered hills where are the German lines, wonderfully bright, and making the hills beautiful sights. Then the short ride through the Monastir streets, with the moonlight on the minarets, makes the entire trip worth while if for no other reason. Then the stir at the mosque, where we get our wounded, the grumblings of the brancardiers, a hurried cup of coffee, and off again through the town, back to Negocani. . . . . .

If we do declare war, I'd like to go into aviation.

Feb. 21, 1917.

Absolutely no news about the United States, so this last must have died down too. . . . . We think there is no hope of our coming in.

We now feel quite at home and reconciled to life at this pile of mud and bricks and broken tiles, which was once probably a flourishing and filthy little Greco-Serbo-Turko town. It is funny that, no matter how weird the surroundings during our many changes, after a little time has elapsed it becomes quite natural and homelike. . . . . Work is steadily increasing. . . . . Every minute of the day is full of interest of one kind or another. If not the shelling, plainly visible up in the mountains, it's the guns, or reinforcements on the road, the shelling of an enemy "avion," a verbal scuffle with an Italian Fiat driver, or helping a Scottish woman out of some simple engine trouble which she'd never fix in a hundred years. . . . .

Feb. 23, 1917.

Your letter of the 19th [January] just arrived, and in it all the good news about the Westfield ambulance. It's fine to know that there is that much pro-Ally feeling in Westfield, and to every one that has given the usefulness of that ambulance in saving lives will more than repay the sacrifice. I hope that they will not be led into thinking that it is a piece of work for the Red Cross, which recognizes no nationality, but that every one who gives will have the deepest feeling for the Allies. The American Ambulance is pro-French. . . . .

One of the new French mechanics brought a black dog with him, dirty as sin, with a raucous bark, but a friendly feeling. His name is "Crapouillot," the original "crapouillot" being an awfully wicked-looking and wickeder-acting bomb. . . . .Crapouillot is a favorite name for the soldiers' dogs, and there must be some 200,000 of them in France. The soldiers have dogs for three reasons—first, as a friend; second, as a rat chaser *(chien-ratier);* and third, in the outposts they see a movement in an opposing trench much quicker than any man. Well, this Crapouillot and I are great friends, and on cold nights he sleeps on the foot of my bed. In fact I have given him fleas. He's got a crook in his tail, and an awfully homely face, but he is just as lovable as Binnie, and just as gruff to anyone he doesn't like, as Binnie was to the postman. Crapouillot is fed at the table, and if he isn't served promptly he barks until he is. Hasn't had a bath during the two months we've had him, and I suppose he didn't have one for years before that. As he seems to flourish, nobody has suggested giving him one. Guess that is about enough about Pouillot for the present. . . . .

Sec. 10 has arrived. They were awfully glad to get out to the front, most of them being direct from America, and having been held up all along the way for weeks

at a time. They had a bad time coming up from Salonique, just as we did. One poor tool drove off the road and down a ravine, turning over twice before stopping. Wasn't hurt a bit either. His car is still there, 25 feet below the road. . . . .

Feb. 29, nope, Mar. 1, 1917.

Things are just the same as they have been for the last few months, viz., rotten, rainy weather, with damp, cold spells, beans and spaghetti, wet blankets and fleas; but for all that I wouldn't be anywhere else for anything. Down here we are twice as useful as we were in France, as the work is twice as hard and three times as interesting. . . . .How those poor fellows ever last out the winter up in the trenches on the mountains I don't see. Better up in the mountains, however, than on the plain, for there the trenches are full of water. After two years of such a life they become like so many wild animals. No matter how patriotic a man may be at the start, in the end the war gets him and he wants peace, and that as soon as possible, even at the sacrifice of his country's hopes. . . . .

Mar. 5, 1917.

S. S. U. 3, Convois Autos, Secteur Postale 510, Armée d'Orient, Par B. C. M., Marseille. To the Secretary of the Westfield Rifle Club:

Dear Sir:

I wish to extend my heartiest and most sincere thanks to the members of the Westfield Rifle Club for the inspiring gift, which reached me yesterday.

Home, for many months now, has been very far away; and it has been only by the occasional arrivals of very old newspapers, that I have managed to keep at all in touch with Westfield as a whole. Yesterday, I

need hardly say it, Westfield did not seem far off. The gift of our country's flag, the emblem which means so much to us all, has made me feel that the heart of Westfield has never been far away at any time from the war for civilization raging in Europe.

I am deeply grateful for the sympathy you show toward the work of the American Ambulance; and your approval is indeed something to be very highly prized, being, as it is, an expression of the feeling of the organization which stands, above all, for patriotism and national right.

It did not escape me, that the flag I received was one of coarse bunting, not such a flag as should be carefully put away and kept immaculate, but one that you wish to be displayed in all sorts of weather. I sincerely regret that military law forbids the displaying of neutral flags in the "zone des armées." However, the events of the past month have considerably narrowed the gulf which separates our own country from participation in the great war. Should that day arrive, rest assured that there will be at least one American flag floating proudly somewhere in the Balkans.

Very gratefully and sincerely yours,

COLEMAN T. CLARK.

Mar. 9, 1917.

Here's some *bad* news. Had my pocket picked in one of these thieving Greek towns. Letter of credit went, also some 150 francs. Sorry I was so stupid as to let it happen. The sad part of it is that it leaves me stranded in Northern Macedonia, or Southern Serbia, with a capital, net and gross, of seven francs, sixty-five centimes. We are expecting a lot of hard work very shortly. . . . .

Mar. 17, 1917. (diary).

The German artillery has been bombarding the town more and more with big shells, and when we go out to the cars, we creep from wall to wall. About five some one told me that I had a flat front tire, and as I didn't want to have a hitch this evening, went out to fix it. No sooner had I gotten over to the car, than they started coming over. As many as a dozen hit within a hundred yards, and all big ones. They were hitting just far enough away, so that I could hear the whistle just a trifle before they struck. So I spent the greater part of the time dropping flat on my face, behind a projection in the wall. A great many little éclats hit all around, but the wall protected me. Needless to say I was pretty well shaken up, and was thankful when I had put the new shoe on, and had patched the old tire. I was covered with mud from head to foot, because I didn't have time to pick out good places in which to drop flat.

Mar. 18, 1917.

Caught some neuralgia. . . .All right now, feeling perfectly well and happy, completely recovered, and rolling regularly. The fleas, which left me, as rats do a sinking ship, while I was lying low, have all come back now; in this country, a sure indication of good health. . . . . About a week ago we were ordered up into town again, [Monastir]. . . . . .

As far as personal excitement is concerned, I've had more of it during the last few days than I want for all the rest of my life. Night before last was still and cold, and a very gentle snow was falling. We had all gone to bed, when we heard whistle after whistle of arriving shells. Strange to say, none of them seemed to burst, or at most they only gave a little pop; and after some 75 or 100 had whistled over, we thought it very

odd that they should fire nothing but what we thought were defective shells. Hour after hour it kept up; hardly one whistle had died down, before another was in the air. . . . .It was not until 4 A. M. that someone rushed in and cried, "Put on your masks right away; it's gas." I shall never forget that feeling of terror which came over me, when I got the first whiff of the acrid, nauseating stuff. It seemed too inhuman that anyone could deliberately throw poison gas at another. . . . With our gas masks we were perfectly safe; but from the street came the sound of continued coughing. The poor civilians had no masks. It was a terrible, terrible thing. In their ignorance they probably went to their cellars, the very worst possible place. A great many were killed by it. We were very thankful when 5:30 came, so that we could load up with blessés, and get out of town. As we left, we saw many a pitiable sight; men, women and children, their faces purple with coughing, and gasping for air, were being led to the hospitals, suffering horribly. . . . .

Just this minute, we received a very sad piece of news. Henry Suckley, the chief of the section in Albania, has been killed by an aero bomb. He was formerly of Section 3, and was with us in France. He was a kind-hearted, upright man in every way, and one of the best fellows I have ever known. His death is a blow to us all, who knew him, and liked him so well. . . . .

Mar. 20, 1917.

This letter has been interrupted already, some five times. We haven't had much time to ourselves. . . . . These last four days have been very gruesome ones, for the poor men suffer terribly, and a great portion of them are either unconscious or delirious by the time they arrive. The road has been very dangerous in spots. . . . . The other night, when we were all out, a big one

poked its nose into our house and spoiled one room I need hardly say that Mar. 19, was moving day. So now we are over in another part of town. It has been the best week I have yet put in. We feel here, as if we were really a great deal of use. Will write again within a few days, and write you more about what has happened. It has all been so intense, and so many things have happened, that I've only mentioned a few. I'm not a bit keen on my letters being published in a "Friends of France" book. They were written for you and not for publication. . . . .

Mar. 20, 1917 (diary).

Since last writing, we've been having if anything a more exciting time than ever. The attack has been going on steadily, and has been quite successful so far. . . We are now in a big school house, in a better part of the city. All in all I think this experience has been worse than Verdun. Any part of the town is likely to be shelled any moment, and we've all been having narrow escapes every day. Have often picked up hot éclats which landed near at hand.

Mar. 23, 1917 (diary).

Coming into town, and not being able to hear the whistles on account of the motor, we can always tell whether any shells are coming by the hysterical flight and cawing of thousands of foolish crows, who simply won't leave town no matter what happens.

Mar. 25, 1917 (diary).

Read an article in the Sat. Eve. Post about the Verdun-Bar-le-Duc road, in which the authoress called it the "sacred way." We thought it over and decided she had been told it was a "sacrée route," which translated vulgarly but accurately would mean a d—— rotten road.

XIII

TRIP TO SALONICA AND BACK

April 1, 1917. Salonique.

This letter is written in an entirely different atmosphere from the last. On the 28th, three of us, Dr. Carey, Fiske, and myself, left the front to come down to Salonique for four or five days, ostensibly on permission, but actually to do a lot of work on our six reserve cars here. . . . .We left our town about six o'clock one evening, taking a two-hour trip in our cars, to reach the town where we were to take the train. . . .All over the flat plain were thousands of little tents, many fires, great masses of material, guns, carts, groups of automobiles; all of it being the great "service de l'arrière", behind the troops actually fighting.

Upon our arrival at the R. R. station it was quite dark, and we had no great trouble in more or less smuggling our ten heavy front and rear springs into one of the "voitures sanitaires", which was no more than an ordinary freight car, with six inches of straw, questionably clean, spread over the floor. After a bad interview with an exasperated corporal, we went to sleep in an enormous empty hospital tent, the train not leaving till six the next morning. . . . .Long before six we rushed out into our freight car. . . . . We had been asleep some time when there was a great rushing around of acetylene lights, and inarticulate mutterings of Chinese stretcher-bearers. The "couchés" were being loaded first. A few minutes later came the "assis". . . . .We seemed to be unsolvable to them, and the guesses as to what the three slumbering things in the corner were, ranged all the way from English to Greek; which last

was too much, and we all sat up, and explained that we were Americans. This, of course, led up to the old, old, discussion of the chances of the U. S. coming in, mostly all in slang, and most of it pretty hard to catch.

It must have been quite a picture, the inside of that car; all cramped together, all smelling; some talking, glad to get away from the front; others quiet, because they were really quite sick; there we all were, 22 French malades, one sick gendarme Grec, one lonely Senegalese, who spat incessantly within a radius of himself of two feet, and three Americans, who were a little unwelcome as being better dressed, and not seeming to have any particular reason for being there. . . . .

It is indeed a privilege to sit amongst the commonest of French soldiers, and to listen to their views on the war, their talks of hardship, their opinions of their officers and food, their own stories of such and such an attack, etc. In the car were "artillerie", "infanterie", "infirmiers", and "génie" (engineers); and they had much discussion among themselves as to which is the hardest life. The "artillerie" vs. "infanterie" was the most violent dispute; the infanterie claiming that the artillerie never had to face the mitrailleuse, or grenades, or use a bayonet; while the artillerie based his argument on the fact that whereas, unless there was an attack going on, the infantry were not much bothered in the trenches, the artillery were always being sought out by aeroplanes, who reported their positions to the enemy artillery, and so they were always being shelled, more or less, attack or no attack. All this was made more spicy, by slangy remarks, which only a Frenchman could make, "Ah! Mon pauvre ami," "Tonnerre de Dieu!", "Penses-tu, chérie?", "Ah! Le salaud!" The difference between French and American slang is that each Frenchman makes up his own slang, while the American confines himself to a few phrases, which originate in

the newspapers or baseball. After some six hours on the floor of this old freight car, which had notices in Serb, French, and Greek plastered all over it, we finally pulled into a town where there was a big English base hospital, all tents. . . . .The most conspicuous thing about the camp was the enormous red crosses, laid out on the ground in red bricks, within a circle of white ones. The crosses were 35 steps long, and eight or nine wide. It seems that a German aeroplane squadron had bombarded it a few nights before: some more useless barbarity on their part, as they knew perfectly well that it was nothing but a hospital. . . . .By the time that long hot day was over, and the faint, white outline of Salonique had come into view far off on the horizon, I began to feel as if I knew everyone in the car pretty well. . . . .

We took two full afternoons to finish up the job; and after that we had three whole days of "permission", of which the most salient feature was the continuous eating. How good it seemed to eat chicken (and even fish), with three or four different fresh vegetables; and for breakfast, chocolate, ham and eggs! All day long we ate oranges, sweet chocolate, and now and then patisserie. Salonique is an intensely interesting place in itself; but with the addition of the European coloring of thousands and thousands of allied officers of all nationalities; soldiers and sailors from all the fleets; motor lorries crashing around; thousands of carts heavily loaded rushing to and from the quays; and just out in the harbor the mass of allied shipping and battleships; it is indeed unique. . . . .

Those three days passed quickly enough and the last evening found us again out in the railroad yards, waiting for the train. . . . .Along about ten there was a great opening and slamming of doors, and in came three Frenchmen and six Russians, each one with a

big sack full of stuff for their "copains" in the trenches. The Ruskies were in fine shape, and sang for hours. Weird chants in minor they were, led by a big black-bearded fellow, who did all the singing until the last three chords, when all the rest joined in, in parts and minor. In our compartment were smouldering five pipes, four cigarettes, and three fetid weeds smoked by us three, known by the name of "Frossards Quills," picked up at random just before leaving. It didn't take long for a wholesome reek to get started, and as soon as the windows were closed each and every Rusky exuded an atmosphere, which would kill at five yards. . . . .In the middle of the night a Frenchman climbed in at one of the stops. Already we were terribly packed, and as everybody was sleepy, no one moved. After a while the Frenchman disappeared, no one knew where; and in the morning no one was thinking about him. When we reached the last station, there was a stir under one of the seats, and out he crawled, having spent a better night than anyone else. . . . .

We don't think U. S. will be in the war. .

XIV

AMERICA IN THE WAR

Apr. 7, 1917.

The great news came yesterday, with what great satisfaction to us you can well imagine. Germany is to be crushed at last, and no matter how great the cost to our country, our case against Germany is so honorable, that we will never regret it. As to ourselves, the section, so far away from it all, we are in a turmoil. The one thing and the only thing that we agree upon, is that with our country in the war, we have got to take a more active part in it than merely driving ambulances. . . . . Every one of us wants to join the expeditionary force if there is to be one. With me it is more than a question of duty. There is no one thing I want more than the privilege of marching as a soldier against Germany. . . . We are to all intents and purposes, French soldiers, and to get out of the service requires a little time. . . . It's a wonderful satisfaction, however, to be in, and feel your conscience vindicated. I only hope that America's humanitarian ideas won't prevent, in the peace terms, the Allies' doing what they ought to do, to Germany. . .

April 14, 1917. (diary).

Yesterday morning at 5 a. m. the section moved. With summer coming on, the valley is too dangerous from malaria, for any troops to be quartered there. . . . Our spot [Bistrica] is up a side valley, and about 200 ft. above the plain. . . . .At our feet is spread out the entire valley, with Prilep at one end, and Banica at the

other. The main highway is a slender line passing through the middle* . . . .Directly in front of us, though at a great distance, is the crest of Kaichmachalan, where there was such hard fighting by the Serbs last September.

Apr. 16, 1917.

Have not yet found out whether I can get away or not, although I feel that I cannot stay on here. As I wrote you at the time, I had signed on for another three months, just about two weeks before we declared war. . . . .The morale has gone up tremendously, since the news came. The soldiers we pass on the road give a shout now and then, of encouragement, instead of the usual, deserved bawling-out of all automobilists as a "sale race." On the 14th, we moved up into the mountains, to a beautiful location about 200 feet above the big plain, of which we have a beautiful view in all directions. . . . .

Apr. 27, 1917.

I know that you are all glad that we are in the war at last. . . .In thinking of all of you going off, I can realize how you have all felt and worried about me during the last year. While you do not feel afraid for yourself, you cannot bear to think of anything happening to the family. Suppose you will go into the infantry or artillery. I'd advise the artillery, as it will take more beanwork and is every bit as dangerous. Since last writing, I have found out that I will not be able to get away before my engagement is up on July 22. . . . .The whole section is of the opinion that the

*One of the great highways of history. Over it, a decade of centuries ago, moved the rabble armies of Xerxes, the phalanxes of Alexander, and the legions of Trajan.

automobile service ought to be run by men who are too old, or otherwise unfit, to do anything else. It is at best an easy life, and the young fellows are certainly needed elsewhere. I have made up my mind to leave when my time is up, for the above reason. I don't think that it would be honorable for me to do otherwise. . . . .

Had a pretty exciting experience the other day. Was coming down an exposed road on a mountain, when I saw a shell burst about three hundred yards ahead. As I was the only thing in sight, I knew it was for my own special benefit. I felt like stopping and staying in the gutter for a while, but in that case they would have shot until they hit the car, sooner or later. So I went on, pretty well frightened. When I got to the place where the first one had landed, two more came, right in the same place, so that they were only some 50 yards away; and one big piece of éclat fell right in front of the car. . . . . When they land as close as that, you don't hear the whistle; and the first thing you are conscious of, is a terrific crash in your ear, and then a bunch of little whistles as the fragments disperse. . . . .

May 7, 1917.

Just after writing my last letter, five new men turned up; so five of the old men have left, Bluethenthal, Palmer, Imbrie, Hollister and Baylies. Bluey and Baylies* are going into aviation. It is very hard to see them go, after we have been together so long a time. Do not think that I speak of leaving because I am sick of the service. . . . . If the United States were not in the war, I would not wish to be anywhere else. Ever since an aeroplane dropped some bombs at the camp,

*Both killed later, in France, in aeroplane actions; Bluethenthal on June 7, 1918, and Baylies June 17, 1918. Baylies had become one of the noted aces of the war. Palmer and Hollister also died in the war.

missing it by two hundred yards, we scatter to the hills whenever we spot one anywhere near overhead. . . . . Most of the time during the past three days we have been sitting out on the hills, watching the bombardment of the German lines, which has, during that time, been incessant.

May 14, 1917. (diary).

Yesterday evening 5 new fellows came. . . . .They had come down on the André le Bon, a hospital ship . . . . .On board were the sons of Von Kluck, and Von Bernstorff, who were being carried around as hostages Now we hear that the Boches are going to put, in every submarine, a French or an English officer. . . . .Five more fellows are going off tonight. Don Armour, Tom Buffum, John Munroe, George End and Giles Francklin. They will certainly be awfully missed.

May 18, 1917.

There are more Jews in Monastir than anything else, although there are a great many Bulgar families, Turks, Serbs, and Albanians. I was surprised at the way all the little kids know French, most all tolerably, and some almost perfectly. If you ask them where they learn it, they do not say from the soldiers, but at school, the "Alliance Iraelite Universelle". . . . .

From the one assis, who sits on the front seat with us, we learn everything that is going on in the trenches . . . . .I hand it to the soldiers who have fought down here for a year and a half, and still keep up their spirits as they do. It is surprising what an amount of military knowledge and resolution, as to the only possible ending of the war, even the stupidest peasant from the obscurest part of France, can accumulate. . . . .I do not mean to give the idea that even the greater part are

full of spirit, the bravado you read about in books; but the feeling of quiet determination is everywhere. . . . . When you ask them seriously about the continuation of the war, I think I can honestly say that the much exploited phrase, "Jusqu' au bout" is an exact reflection of what they really feel. . . . .The swimming pool we made is a wonder. We can take four strokes one way, and three across it's breadth. . . . .

XV

TRIP DOWN INTO THESSALY

May 28, 1917.

Have all had a big surprise since the last letter I wrote you. Things are never the same long.

May 29, 1917 (diary).

The dope on our leaving for the South seems to be as follows: Constantine is making frantic efforts to get in quickly the Thessalonian grain crop. The Allies deduce that he intends to start things once he's got it. They are sending down a bunch of divisions (said to be five), to be ready for any eventuality, and of course with them must go some ambulance sections and hospitals. We seem to have been lucky enough to be the one section pickd out from up here.

June 3, 1917.

We had been installed in a little place in the hills of Monastir, for about a month and expected to be there all summer: suddenly, however, the order came to move, and we went back to Florina. . . . .At Florina, we stayed three or four days. One morning, [May 31] a new "ordre de mouvement" arrived, and back went the tires and kitchen utensils into our cars. I left first, to lead the way for Rosamond, the big White, which hauls Betsy, the two wheeled rolling kitchen, her chimney frequently cutting all telephone connections in the Orient. . . . .In the course of an hour or so we reached

the main road—an hour more and we came to the mountains, and the Whites had a hard time. . . . .I went on ahead, to the top, to a plateau effect, which I had learned was the scene of a great battle, last year. Great quantities of dry bones were scattered about, the entire skeletons of mules, unexploded shells, bits of clothing, and millions of shell fragments. After a long session with the mountain, we finally all arrived at the base, passed a big lake [Ostrovo], down another valley, full of flourishing villages, through an old town, on the top of the last cliff, very famous in ancient history [Vodena, the ancient Edessa], down the last descent, to a great English hospital camp. [Verticop]. Here we spent 24 hours, and were off again. . . . .We got mixed up with a couple of batteries of French 75s, which were going down to Larissa. Nothing to look at but deep pools of black, stagnant water, and nothing to listen to but millions of Aristophanes frogs, who cheered for Yale all the morning. Millions of insects kept up a steady hum, the ensemble making a tone somewhere around high C.

. . . . .After lunch we went to sleep under the cars, the coolest place in that desolate spot. Starting on, soon the road changed, and from there on it was a pleasure to drive up and down hill, in the midst of a very pretty country, farms, flowers, herds of animals, and above all trees and lots of them. Finally at the top of a rise, what burst into view but the sea! [The Aegean, near Katarina]. . . . . .

But in spite of all the experiences, of interesting and sometimes exciting kinds, home is never far away from my thoughts, and I look forward to the day when the war will be over, and we will be together again. Cannot see myself at home before it is. I only wish my part in it could be a greater one: one that calls for more sacrifice and more responsibility. . . . .

June 14, 1917. (diary).

(Arrived Larissa 13 Eve.) We had been at Katarina for about 12 days, had been down to the beach about 4 times apiece, usually in a pussy-faced skiff, had paraded up and down the long main street, buying olives, raisins, dates and yogoourt, had been given revolvers, had been eating our fill of cherries, and had been getting fresh vegetables and eggs, had at last seen the arrival of a barrel of beer, and had each had a glass of it and found it very bad, had played great quantities of chess under big trees—in fact had become quite contented with Katarina as a permanent resting place—when in came the word one evening that we were to get up at 4 the next morning, and leave for Larissa—*alea facta est.*

The next morning witnessed the usual commotion of demenagement, pulling down of tents, struggling with the kitchen, the loading of a considerable quantity of cold iron souvenirs, the periodical dispersion of the Bosso [?] library, all the usual rushing around and excitement—and at 6:45 we were off to the west. . . . .

We had been hearing for a long time about the *comitadgi,* and so every one kept his pistol or carbine at hand, just as a matter of comfort. The cook and Salonique rode in front with me. . . . .

We soon got into a very wild country. . . . .Olympos always in the same position, to the south. Our whole day's run, in fact, amounted to coasting around the back of the massif, and leaving her as far to the north as she had been to the south of us at Katarina.

At another place we came upon a little lonely village, very different from any other, and very substantially built. Here I picked up Pouillot, who had dropped off the White. He and Salonique had a fight immediately, over the steering wheel. After the village came an artillery parc, and a bunch of Red Cross wagons.

Occasionally, from now on, we passed mounted patrols. . . . .

Some more artillery, and we breezed into Elassona, where we stopped to assemble the convoy. . . . .Soon up in the hills again. . . . .we were in a rich country—the Thessalian plain—and the fields were full of grain, tobacco, vegetables, and vines. . . . . Tirnovar came into sight, and soon we were there. . . . . Went on to within a couple of km. of Larissa. I noticed that right alongside of us was a new trench, dug so as to face the north, probably done by the Greeks. We went on into town, a wonderful experience.

Great numbers of soldiers with bayonets lined the streets (the entrance was only yesterday morning), and behind them were great crowds of civiles, men, women and children. Great lines of camions were passing up the main street, soldiers, cavalrymen; and occasionally little groups of royalist soldiers were being led through heavily guarded.

We do not know as yet, the sentiment of the population; certainly half looked at us sullenly, in spite of the French flags hung out everywhere. Every store was closed, and everyone in town was jammed in the main street, watching the influx of the French troops and automobiles. It was a real civilized city, with electric lights, plate-glass windows, and shining cabs. A great square in the middle has a band stand, and little tables and chairs sprinkled around. But the interesting thing, before all others, was the attitude of both French and Greeks—every Frenchman heavily-armed and patrols mounted everywhere. We went on to a great camp of cement barracks, occupied only yesterday morning by Greek troops. . . . .In the caserne next us are some hundreds of Greek prisoners. . . . .

Last night there was one lone shot fired in the middle of the night. This morning C—— stumbled over a

body a hundred yards away. It was a Greek commandant executed last night, the target for that one shot. His crime was that, when the French approached yesterday morning, this Greek surrendered, and when giving up his sword, fired point blank at the French captain and killed him. . . . .Conseil de guerre yesterday afternoon, and the shot last night.

This morning came the official news that the king had abdicated, and that Athens was held by the French.

June 18, 1917. [*Larissa*].

It seems to me that our country, as yet, is not taking the war very seriously. Why is it that 'the rain cannot dim the enthusiasm of hundreds of golfers at Lakewood' and that the baseball season goes on just as buoyantly as in peace times? In England all sports stopped dead, not because the government forced them to, but because almost every athlete realized immediately that the sport issue was nothing as compared with his duty to the country. I should have thought that these athletes would be the first to answer the call in our country. Instead, of that the baseball organization has not lost a single man.

Any one who has watched the events of the last three years, has read of hundreds of thousands of men killed at Verdun, on the Somme, in the Carso, is still watching France and England draining themselves uncomplainingly and courageously, and sees the whole civilized world crying for help, but who can still cling to baseball and other sports, is in a state of brutal indifference which makes me ashamed of America. How can our country be so unpitying? I do not criticize Congress. I only feel indignant against the attitude of the nation as a whole.

"The New Republic" states: (1) We realize that France needs troops badly, and that sooner or later we will send an expeditionary force, but (2) we will not send any until the troops can be sent with reasonable safety. Does not that seem a little like saying, 'We will send soldiers, but nothing must happen to them'? Every transport, French or English, that goes to Salonica runs a far greater risk than any Atlantic transport. If Germany can keep her submarine system as efficient as it is to-day, the seas will never be reasonably safe. But the troops must pass just the same.

If Russia should make peace, the only thing which could save the Allies would be the United States. So, right this minute, she ought to be going about the getting of her great army very, very seriously, and not amusing herself as she always has been doing. It will mean terrible sacrifices for every one before the end arrives, but we must go through with it, not just because Germany has killed some hundreds of our citizens and we are fighting to get reparation, but because of the great ideal of the war, the crushing of a rotten system, and justice for little nations, which will never come about with any half-way peace. Oh, if the United States will only realize her opportunity in time! Every hour means so much. It is not going to be any four or five hundreds of thousands of American soldiers who are to win the war, but a great army of three or four millions.

I am not criticising anything that has been done or has not been done since we have declared war. I am just sore at the frivolous idea of the country toward the war, as reflected in all the newspapers. I am sick of looking at picture after picture of women soldiers and Boy Scouts. Why don't the people as a whole over there realize the horrible thing that is in store for them?

Last night I saw a regiment marching off. As it was in a town, they went 'musique à tête.' There is nothing so inspiring as these blue ranks, with their thousands of rifles, marching steadily off to the sound of the 'Sambre et Meuse'; big fellows and little ones; every now and then a little dog, on a string, trotting alongside—the ensemble makes the most emotional thing I know. You think of so many things as you watch them; the great power of such a regiment of men; the sufferings that they have been through and are about to go through again; the idea of quiet determination which they give you when the music stops for a moment and you hear just the steady tramp of the feet, and watch wave after wave come around the corner and pass off into the distance. You think of the Marne, Verdun, the Somme; and above all, of France, to fight for France, to push back the Germans; and of Alsace-Lorraine. You will feel the same when you see our own soldiers march down Broadway the day they embark for France. It will be so different a thing from a flat and stupid parade.

July 5, 1917.

We have moved again and are once more in Serbia, after our one month's excursion into Greece. Am very glad to get back to a little work again, after a month of doing nothing in Katarina and Larissa. While down there we all had a one-day excursion to Volo, which was a wonderful little place. The town was draped with English and French flags, and the populace was very enthusiastic; real conquering-hero stuff, with little girls thrusting flowers into your hands, and saying, "Vive la France, l'ami de la Grèce." At Larissa we slept in a Greek caserne, occupied the night before by the royalists, who surrendered to the French. . . . . Bathing in the Salambria [the ancient Peneus], was very good

fun. We used to walk a mile up the bank and float down on the current, which was quite strong. When we drove into town, the second day of the occupation, great crowds lined the streets, very enthusiastic. Tino was certainly not popular in the north. . . . .Found the town full of Greeks who had worked in the U. S. . . . .

The ride back into Serbia was marvelous, over mountains and plains. Last night we were strung out under the stars when somebody noticed that the moon, which had come up full, was then a crescent upside down. It turned out to be a total eclipse. . . . .

[Leaving Larissa July 2, 1917, they returned to Serbia; by way of Elassona, Servia (a Greek town), across the Vistrica river, Koziani, Lake Petsopor, the Eksisu valley, Banica and so to Sakulevo. They then proceeded to the Serbian front, and were three weeks with the Serbian Army, doing unexciting evacuation work. The diary mentions Brod, Slivica, Dobroveni, Petelini, and the Cerna river.]

July 26, 1917.

I am very glad to have had these three weeks with the Serbs. They have certainly impressed me as a very kind, simple, wholehearted people, and above all a brave one. . . . .

XVI

GOODBYE TO THE AMBULANCE

Salonique, July 29, 1917.

Well, the relief has come at last, and here I am, discharged from the Ambulance. It was certainly hard to step out, but I do not regret it in the least, as I think it was the only right thing to do. These fourteen months have been very happy ones for me, and very interesting, as you all know, but now there is a greater call, and to refuse it would not sit easy on any of our consciences. There are ten of us in this crowd, the last of the old men. We are hoping that by the time we reach Paris, some arrangement will have been made for the Americans abroad, who were the first to come over, and now wish to join their own colors. . . . . .

Germany must not get away with what she has started to do. She must not even get off easy and a little baffled. She must be punished and put down. I know that the hearts of England and France will not fail them, and after American men and boys have been in it, I know that her heart will not fail her either. . . . I wonder how many times I have written all of this to you before. . . . .It is certainly the biggest thing in my life. . . . .

The French Lieutenant [Lieut. Derode], when we left, called together the three of us, who were in the section with him at Verdun, and said that he could never forget any of us who went through that with him. To have been through Verdun together, was a bond which time could not break. It was very touching, and I

hated to say good-bye. I will always remember the lieutenant as he stood out in the middle of the street at Bras, as shells were landing on all sides, and men and horses fell wounded or killed, in the road. Throughout it all, he stood there, encouraging everyone. . . . .You would find it easy to die for such a man. . . . .

It was equally hard to say good-bye to Hill [Lovering Hill the leader of Section 3], the most wonderful fellow I ever knew. He has received the croix de guerre four times, and he is not through yet. I was a great friend of all the French mechanics and the two cooks, and I found it awfully hard to say anything to them. Crapouillot knew something was up, but not exactly what, and was the only one who was in perfectly good spirits. Verdun, Bois-le-Prêtre, Monastir, I connect all these people with these three places in one way or another, and with such vivid incidents that you can't forget. But I feel that harder times are yet to come. We leave for Paris, perhaps this afternoon. . . . .

August 13, 1917.

[On board ship from Salonique to Italy]. We are still a day out from Italy. . . . .The eleven days we put in in Salonique were the worst, certainly, we ever went through anywhere. All the interest of Salonique as a cosmopolitan city was lost, as one staggered up the shady side of the street, and gasped into bed. I shall never forget that heat. We sailed finally, on Aug. 8th . . . . .Was very much surprised to notice the precautions taken with the ship, as compared with last autumn, when we ambled through the worst submarine area in the world, day and night both, pulling off, a bare three hundred kilometres a day, with no escort. Today, everything is different, but I'd better write nothing about it. . . . .

Had last night a talk with an old Scottish captain: "Ach, Sonnie, so ye are for being a soldier when ye tooch France. Hoot Mon; ye'll get damn sick of it." That was all the encouragement I could get out of him. . . . .One of the lieutenants of the vessel says that we were shot at last night but that the torpedo passed ahead of the ship. . . . .

Paris, August 26, 1917.

Our trip was uneventful, but more or less weird, as long as we were on the water. Once on land, [Italy] our triumph began. Our train of "poilus" was fêted all the way to France. Palm leaves, vegetables, fruits, and flags, were passed up to us for some 600 kilometres: the palm leaves entirely covering the train. . . When night came, the racks for the suit-cases were commandeered by us. . . . .Being the only one who could be lifted up and wedged in, and the one, who in case of a fall would cause the least damage, I accordingly put in two nights upon the racks, and it is only now, that my body is beginning to come around again into shape. . . . .

In spite of all my rushing around, have not yet succeeded in getting into any branch of the American Army. Day before yesterday, I was turned down by the aviation, on account of my eyes. That was to be expected. Yesterday, I went around to the artillery, and found that there was nothing doing there either. The reason given was, that I had had absolutely no military experience. I make no comment on that, because it hurts. . . . .The hard part of it is, that if, instead of being at Verdun last summer, and Monastir this winter, I had slept for six months on the Mexican border, I would have had "military experience" enough to be now an officer in the U. S. A. . . . . I'd give anything to get home for a little while, and see you all again, but I

know right now, that I will never come back to America until the war is over. . . . .

I am awfully sore at being taken for a slacker by the ordinary U. S. private, who has just come over. . . . and yet I have met some awfully nice fellows over here; good country stock, right from the farm, a lot of them. Homesick! Gee! How homesick they are! And yet, just from looking at them, you can see that they will be wonderful soldiers when the time comes. . . . .

Aug. 31, 1917.

Do you remember my writing last May about the establishment of an artillery school at Fontainebleau for Americans? For some reason or other, the thing was given up about a month later, and no Americans were allowed to join. . . . .However, by running all over the place, asking here and there, sitting hours in French lobbies, I finally got hold of a French Commandant (Major), and he told me he thought it could be done. . . . It seems that the school at Fontainebleau is a regular French school. To get into it I must sign up in the Foreign Legion for the duration of the war, after first getting permission from the French Minister of War. If it goes through it will be the finest thing imaginable . . . . . Whether I can pass the exams at the end of the course, I do not know. It will be the hardest thing I ever attempted in my life, everything in French and technical in addition. If it's only a matter of hard work, I will get away with it, because there is nothing in the world I would rather do. . . . . I fully realize my duty to the U. S., if they'd take me as a soldier, private or officer. But they won't. Heaven knows, I've tried everything. . . . .Am weathering a horrible spell of homesickness these days.

Sept. 18, 1917.

Things are at last beginning to move. On Saturday last, they told me that I had been accepted. This Saturday I go down again to sign on, and will leave Monday for Fontainebleau. . . .I knew a year ago last April, that I would not be back until the war was over. . . . . Have never spent such a month of anxiety in my life. . .

Sept. 30, 1917.

I am very glad that you got hold of the "Sambre et Meuse." It is about the most inspiring thing in the world, and I meant to send it to you, long, long ago. I must tell you about the first time I ever heard it. It was a year ago in June, when we were just beginning to find out a little about the real French spirit and what a wonderful country France was after all. Our ambulance unit had come to a temporary halt, and we were sitting around on our cars, lined up in the public square of the little town in which we were stopping.

Suddenly, just around the corner, came a terrific blast of bugles, and we knew that it was a regiment of our division, passing through the town on the way up to Verdun—from which only half of them were to come back, ten days later. Another blast from about forty bugles, and then came the strains of the "Sambre et Meuse."

I never heard it before, but with the very first notes cold chills ran up and down my back, and I could hardly keep from crying. The streets were instantly lined with people, everyone as affected as I. The music became louder and louder, and almost immediately the leaders came into sight; bugles shining in the sun, and all elevated at exactly the same angle, and right behind them the endless line of blue uniforms.

You know from the music, that while the tune goes steadily along, periodically the bugles come in on a new theme, not during the minor parts but when the original martial theme comes back. Well, just before the bugles come in, all forty of them go up in the air and perform a few flourishes, all in perfect time, and then they all come horizontally to the lips just at the exact fraction of a second when it is their turn to play, everything precise and in perfect rhythm, brass, drums, and the steady beat of thousands of feet; after the brass, the regimental colors, which everyone salutes as they pass; the highest officers leading on horseback, and then wave after wave of blue.

Your spirits go up and down with every variation of the music. The eyes fill up with tears during the quieter parts, and then when the original martial theme comes back, and the bugles come in with a roar, and the drums roll louder and louder, you instantly have a change of heart and become wildly elated.

The music itself is wonderful. But when you have three or four crack French regiments marching behind, it is still more so. When in addition you have Verdun to think of, and you know what a call and rallying cry it is to everyone of the French soldiers passing before you, you can well imagine that the ensemble is overwhelming and plays havoc with your nervous system.

Sept. 30, 1917.

Have just been out to lunch. Down at the corner I saw a big general's car approaching; looked inside and there was Joffre sitting back, with a wonderful kindly face. I immediately clicked my heels together, and pulled off a tremendous salute; and what do you think he did? He answered it! This is another thing that I shall not forget.

Am really glad that you published the letter of June 18th, in which I was pretty sore at the way the U. S. was going about the war*. . . . .I remember that Mr Britling was equally sore about England's method at the beginning; but look, now, after three years, at what England has done. . . . .We don't realize yet, what a calamity a German peace would be. . . . .Spirit is a thing which must come from the heart, and we are awfully cool and comfortable, compared with the French and English.

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*Published in N. Y. *Tribune* of Aug. 10, 1917.

XVII

THE FONTAINEBLEAU SCHOOL

October 14, 1917.

No rustic ever went to Yale as a Freshman, with more feeling of greenness and homesickness than I had when I got off the train at Fontainebleau, and started out to become a French Artilleryman.

Went first to the "Bureau de la place", had my papers examined, was sternly looked over by a French colonel; was then passed on to a commandant, who looked me over again, and handed me over to one of his confrères; who went through the entire operation again, seemed more or less satisfied, and sent me to the dépôt, where I took off khaki and put on blue forever more. I was given two uniforms, a common soldier's, both very large for me, and making me look extremely grotesque. A képi (cap), oozos (leather puttees—shapeless), two pairs of shoes with 76 nails in each sole, a pair of spurs, a blue overcoat, some underwear after the French fashion, reaching to the heels, and, as a suitable climax, a tremendous sabre, which when placed upright, reaches from my heels to my chest. Somewhat overwhelmed, I staggered off with this load to Curley's apartment, where I climbed into the greater part of my new equipment, looked into the glass and declared myself unrecognizable.

The school numbers almost three thousand young Frenchmen, divided into brigades of about 20 to 25 men each. New classes start every two weeks, and the graduates are ever leaving. My brigade is composed of fellows who have been at the front a certain length of time,

and have been especially chosen as being fitted to become officers. So, with that in mind, you can see how nice it is of the French to let me, a young American who knows nothing about artillery, and whom they know not the least thing about, enter this course with a brigade of picked men, to the end of becoming an officer in their artillery. Needless to say, this impresses upon me the necessity of working hard and making good.

Our brigade lives in a big room in one of the barracks. The living is simple, the furnishings simpler. Twenty straw mattresses on twenty little wooden tables about thirty centimetres high; two blankets apiece; a hard little burlap-covered straw cylinder for a pillow; a long wooden table running the length of the room, and a long bench on each side. This is home.*

The young fellows in my brigade are all very, very nice, and glad to help me in anything I don't understand. They are curious, naturally, and you can imagine the questions they ask. They say, "Ah! If you had known what the artillery is, you would not have left the autos." They don't understand anyone getting out of an easy service to enter a hard one; and I can understand and appreciate the ordinary Frenchman's attitude after three years of war. The first burst of enthusiasm wears off after a while with most people, and the war becomes to them a machine, of which they are a small part, and which seems to keep going forever. After what they have been through, the hardship, the filthiness of it all, and the danger, you can see that a large part of the idealism of the war fades away in time. So their philosophy is, if you find yourself in an easy place, why change to a harder one?

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*This school was founded by Napoleon; and the coarse bread, narrow bed, and hard work were a part of his democratic plan; for he said that temperance and activity would render his officers robust, and inspire respect and obedience in the soldiers under them.

At six in the morning a bugle starts blowing, and continues to blow until the drowsiness is drummed out of you. An old territorial brings up some coffee (jus), and a yard of bread. You gulp it down hastily, rush down stairs to a great trough and wash, and at seven o'clock the different brigades are marching off to their classes. The instructors (all first lieutenants) have eagle eyes for anything unmilitary, and a button of your coat, for example, unbuttoned, is a dire offense. The periods are usually of an hour and a half duration followed by fifteen minutes repose; then another class, and so on until eleven thirty, lunch at 12, of the ordinary army fare, a study period till 1:30 and then more classes till six o'clock. Sometimes it is in a class-room, where we study the trajectories of projectiles; sometimes in the open, around a gun; sometimes a trip out into the country in auto, or on bicycles, where we pick out imaginary battery emplacements, or make maps, learn to judge distances, angles, etc.; other sessions to learn how the approvisionment of a battery in munitions or food is maintained; signaling; telegraphing, horse-back riding, ordinary foot-drill. You can imagine how much spare time one has with such a schedule. What would take two years in peace times, is crowded into four months now. The army has got to have more and more artillery, and officers must be manufactured.

Well, two weeks have flown by, and I am more or less dazed at the amount of ground that has been covered. None of the work is extremely complicated, though everything is long and requires all the attention you can possibly give it. Horse-back riding is coming along all right, although the first couple of days were rather painful. The other day we had our sabres out, and learned how to hold and present them. Of course the sabre is just for form these days, and they do not attempt to teach sword-play. Another day I had to

march the brigade around to the different classes and events of the day; and got away with it, without having too much confusion. Believe me, the French necessary to order up a dinner in a restaurant, is nothing, compared to the amount necessary to demonstrate why such a formula applies, with such and such a projectile, at a given range.

October 21st.

Have now been three weeks in a blue uniform and still feel more or less unused to it. This week I must have a picture taken; it will certainly surprise you.

There are some awfully nice fellows in the brigade, all of them in fact; not a one who does not put himself out to help us in things we do not understand. Of course they are a very mixed crowd; from the best families in France to the ordinary Paris bourgeois; but they mix together as if they all were in the same class, and money makes no difference. The war has done this. They have all had one thing in common, the life at the front, and there is no doubt about it that it tends to bring the classes together. During the daytime personality is effaced; you are a blue figure in a brigade of 23 or 24 others. You march about to different classes, as a little blue unit in a school of 2,700 others. Then at night, when the entire brigade is grouped around the long table running the length of the room, the different personalities come out. Arnaud, the Parisien bourgeois of Mont-Parnasse starts telling about his experiences at "le Chemin des Dames," in a slang peculiar to that part of Paris; Curbilltre, from the Midi; Renaudau d'Arc, from one of the oldest families in France; Lasne, an iron worker from Le Nord; all have their stories, each in a dialect a little different from the others, and with an accent entirely different; and yet they all have a great deal in common, and seem to mix

infinitely better together after three weeks at the school, than as many Americans at Yale do after a year's acquaintance. About half of them have been decorated, and you must remember that the "Croix de Guerre" for them was much harder to get than mine.

A few days ago we went out into the country in a truck and picked out a suitable emplacement, determined whether we could fire on a certain château hidden behind a hill about three kilometres away, found out whether the emplacement was sufficiently hidden behind the hill, so that the blaze of a shot from the gun would not be seen by an imaginary German observation post on a crest away off on the horizon; drew a sketch of the secteur supposedly allotted to us; picked out with the glasses and map, important enemy positions, such as cross-roads, railroad stations, etc.; and determined what inclination we would have to give the cannon to hit them: back in the school again, and classes on the trajectory, shells, fuses, an hour or so beside a gun, dismounting it and explaining the functions of each separate piece; drill with sabre or gun. This is a typical day's work, and you can see it is not easy.

At night, of course, every window is hermetically sealed, this being Europe; and the atmosphere is pretty foggy in the morning. About ten days ago a pane of glass broke and we have been having a little fresh air at night. This is very painful for the brigade as a whole, though very welcome to me, for these twenty-four young Frenchmen certainly steam before morning.

October 27, 1917.

All these boys are as young as I, some younger; and what things they have been through! You hear them speak of "Le Mort Homme", "Le Chemin des Dames", "La Somme", "Champagne", and realize that you are

in the presence of the real stuff. Quite a few have been wounded. They all have been through it, and the real way. One sad little thing I noticed is, that when the daily package of mail arrives for our brigade, I am the only one who does not receive letters with the big black mourning band around the edge.

You have no idea of the machinery pertinent to the firing of a shot out of a cannon. All the tremendous amount of thought that goes before it, such as the difference in level between cannon and objective, and wind, the temperature, the barometer, the regulation of the height of the bursting, allowance for inaccuracy, etc., my estimate of the requisites for a good artillery man become more and more exacting.

Have not yet met many of the American officers at Fontainebleau. One of them asked me a question in French the other day, and almost fell over backwards when I answered, "Sorry I can't help you, but I am pretty new myself." I have not gotten used to being taken for a Frenchman, and don't believe I ever shall. Don't bother to send candy or tobacco, as it probably won't arrive.

November 5, 1917.

This afternoon, a long session around a cannon and then practice "en batterie." A bunch of American officers were being trained on the guns next to us, and were doing about the same things, but in English. It seemed strange to hear the orders from one group: "Tir percutant—par quatre—correction dix-huit par la droit—par batterie—feu!"; and from the others comes a nasal twang, "Angle of sight, zero—2,500, sweeping—fire!" At no time does the work cease to be interesting. We have taken up the telephone and wireless in turn; we will soon be signaling and firing. The 75 of course is the gun to which most of the attention is given, but

we will take up in turn all the lighter guns and some of the mortars.

Aside from the work, I thoroughly enjoy the simple life in the barracks, with 20 or so young Frenchmen. Their outlook on everything, especially the war, is so different from ours. Their conversation is like listening to an awfully good book. The mixture of Gascon, Midi, Nord, and Parisien, always calls your attention. The slang they use is an art. . . . .

December 31, 1917.

The end is fast approaching, and, were it not for the opportunity to do better work, one would almost regret leaving Fontainebleau. It has been a wonderful three months, not only for its uniqueness, but for the privilege of living with and knowing French soldiers as they really are. No matter what we do together, drill, study, or fool, there is always a spirit of camaraderie, which is a little different from anything I have seen or experienced at home. They don't say much about it, but Alsace-Lorraine is never very far away. . . . . I find these fellows just as good companions as Americans, and infinitely more frank than the social system at Yale would permit: that is to say, you know all their thoughts all the time. . . . .

Am sure any German offensive has less chance of succeeding than the great Verdun offensive. . . .I'd give anything to be in it.

Jan. 22, 1918.

This will be my last letter from Fontainebleau, for we get out day after tomorrow. Today has brought me very good news. I am going to be allowed to go into a French battery as an aspirant. The news came out last night, with our marks. I came out seventh in the brigade, which was much better than I had expected.

This morning we had our choice of regiments. I chose the 75s. . . . .On getting out day after tomorrow, I get 20 days permission, which I will probably spend in Paris . . . . .Fontainebleau has been such a wonderful experience, above all in war time. I have made a great many friends, and I regret that everything is going to be broken up. . . . .Am certainly very grateful for the privilege of coming here, and above all, for the privilege of going out into a battery. . . . .Tonight we have a farewell banquet. It will be the last time we will all be together.

Jan. 29, 1918.

22, Rue de l'Université. Am having a very quiet but a very enoyable time in Paris. I am all the time with good friends, and that is the principal thing. . . . .Am not afraid of going to the front, but I am more or less timorous about going out as an officer, with a certain amount of responsibility, into a foreign army, in a branch I really know but little about. . . . .Am sure, however, that everything will go all right; and I feel too deeply interested in the war, to care if my first steps may be a little awkward. At the present moment, I would not change my grade of aspirant, to that of first lieutenant in the U. S. Army.

I could not easily express the feelings of admiration I have for France. When I mention France, I do not mean the corruption in her government, the life at Paris, or the ordinary Frenchman's limited views on everything not French. I think of the people as a whole, which the ordinary American knows nothing about; their suffering and determination, still bound to win after 3½ years of being the under dog. There enters into it also the pride the French have in their army, the simple satisfaction they feel in saying, "The Frenchman is the best soldier in the world." I do not know

enough about it to say whether or not this is true, but it is largely because they feel it, that they are as fine as they are. The more time covers it up, the more the Marne stands out to me as the greatest sentimental effort that was ever made. . . . .It was will power that won.

Jan. 31, 1918.

There was a raid in Paris last night which scared the civilians terribly, and with good reason. Towards eleven o'clock they blew the horns in the streets, and all the lights went out. Immediately afterward we heard the buzzing of the French aeroplanes on guard, which all the old ladies in the house took for the Gothas. Nothing happened for about half an hour or so, and then I heard the anti-aircraft guns start going off. It seemed quite weird to hear guns at Paris. A few minutes later I heard ten or a dozen bombs drop, but none in our district. The whoozing of the empty shrapnel cases coming down added considerably to the fright. A bomb is never heard until a fraction of a second before it hits—a little whing, and then the crash; whereas the shrapnel case, lumbering down much more slowly, is heard a few seconds before it hits. The papers say very little about the raid. They mention a certain amount of "dégâts de matériel et de vie humaine," but the principal feeling is of hatred, not regret. . . . .

Coleman: Aspirant French Army: Jan. 1918.

XVIII

AT THE FRONT AS A SOLDIER

Vannes, Feb. 14, 1918.

Well, here I am out in Brittany for five days at the dépôt of my regiment. Left Paris yesterday morning and arrived here last night towards six. As I got off the train and stepped out into this quaint little place, where the little streets wind in and out, and the only sound heard is the shuffle of wooden shoes on the cobbles, I couldn't help thinking, what an odd situation it was, after all! I felt all alone and in the wrong pew; but don't think for a minute that I was downhearted. Stepped into a little hotel, took a room, examined the bed, and went promptly to sleep, waiting for daylight before making any decisions. This morning I shined up all my armor, and went around to the dépôt of the 28eme to present myself to le capitaine. Thought this was going to be an ordeal, but it turned out to be one of the nicest talks I have ever had. As soon as he heard that I was an American he was all excited, and asked me a thousand questions, which of course I could not answer. He turned me over to the commandant, the next man higher up, and he was as nice as he could be, too. So my first morning with greatness turned out very happily, and today I have three times as much assurance as I possessed last night. Was introduced to quite a bunch of officers, and they were all as nice as they could be. A bunch of sous-officiers took me out to lunch and fed me on snails and cider, and treated me as if I had known them all my life. Never have I been with Frenchmen and had any other kind of reception. . . . .

Will do practically nothing during these five days.

Passing a few days at the dépôt is only a formality which every aspirant goes through before going out to his battery. I have already been assigned one. I really feel a lot less capable than some of the ordinary soldiers who salute me. However, I do expect to learn when at the front. . . . .

Feb. 26, 1918.

Aspirant C. T. Clark 2eme Groupe; 5eme Batterie, 28e Regt. d'Artillerie de Campagne, S. P. 163. Every thing going well. . . . . "En repos" for the moment. . . . . Have certainly been having wonderful treatment from everybody. Three nights ago I dropped into the officers' mess, the "popote," after an eight-mile trudge, and in a fainting condition. Seated around the table were the captain and all the lieutenants in the groupe, and the doctor, and they acted right away as if I were a long-lost friend; sat me down to their dinner, and had my whole history out of me in five minutes. They were the finest bunch of men I ever had the luck to fall in among. For no reason in the world they did everything possible to help me along and made me feel like a brother rather than an unknown foreigner. The captain* is a wonder; about thirty years old, tall, thin, good-looking and energetic. When he lifts his finger things jump around, and everyone likes him.

Yesterday morning they doled me out a horse, which considerably scared me; and an "ordonnance" [*i. e.*, orderly], who cleans my shoes, brings me around a pail of water, makes my bed and receives six seeds a month for this service. He also feeds the cheval, cleans him, runs errands, and, in fact, has nothing in the world to do except wait on me. This has made me quite ashamed of myself, as I have never felt myself weighty

*Maurice Morel, killed May 28, 1918, by the same shell that killed Coleman.

enough material to occupy the entire horizon of another man's existence. . . . . I have as yet done no work in the battery, the capitaine breaking me into things little by little and doing everything to aid me. It is all really too wonderful, and never did I enjoy anything more.

Mar. 5, 1918.

Have just had a very boring week on account of being sent from the battery to a school of "perfection" for American officers, where I have been helping the French captain do the instructing. Was only at the battery three days before a call came in from the Corps d' Armée, asking for some French officer who knew English to go to this school for a while, and, of course, being American, they nabbed me as being just the thing for it. . . . . So here I am, in this rotten little town [Billy], doing practically no work and aching to get back to the battery.

Yesterday's mail brought me ten letters, the first in three weeks. The reason for the delay was that all my letters were sent first to Fontainebleau, then to Paris, then to Bretagne, then to the battery, and finally here. They all made me very happy, as all letters from home do. . . . . How I hate Germany! You have thoroughly reassured me as to America's part in the war, and I see that the spirit is coming along better all the time. . . . . I am not in the least worried as to our ability to beat Germany, twice as strong as she ever was before, on the western front. In the next two or three years we will have the men; but does the Administration realize that the merchant marine is even more important—in fact, is the whole question? . . . .

Am afraid I will not be home for quite a while yet. However, as I have said many times before, home has never seemed very far away, in spite of the distance, and almost two whole years of absence.

March 12, 1918.

Here I am still in this bum little town, and having still a rather poor time. . . . . It has been a very good thing for me, as it has given me a chance to study a lot of good artillery books. . . . . How fast the time goes! Fontainebleau already seems a long distance in the past. . . . .

Hope you are not worrying all the time about me. Don't think that there is danger lurking around the corner every minute. Everyone has a bad time now and then, but the dangerous moments, even for the soldier in the trenches, are few and far between. What's more, it is a privilge to risk something in such a cause. I don't think there ever was a bigger one. . . . . I am among friends, find everything interesting, and am, in fact, having the time of my life. . . . .

March 19, 1918.

Nothing could be better. Have at last rejoined the battery,* and am more and more happy. Am living with the officers and am treated as one. Everyone takes pains to teach me every new thing which comes up, and I do not in the least feel like a stranger. Am sleeping nine feet under ground, eating well, learning fast, making good friends and thoroughly enjoying my work. Could I ask anything more? I begin to see why France is unbeaten and never will be. Not a great deal of excitement for the moment, but intensely interesting stuff all around me. . . . .

(*Diary*)—Our P. C.* is a little bit of a thing; one room 2½ by 3½ metres, under three rows of logs; a little tunnel, and another little room with 3 bunks. . . . . Coucy-le-Château 4 km. away.

*At the Mont des Tombes, just north of Leuilly (per diary).
*Poste couverte, abri, dugout, shelter.

March 21, 1918 (diary).

Barrage this morning at 6 A. M.; 6 corps par piece pour 3 minutes. . . . . Very foggy and nobody knew what was up. . . . . Barrage repeated, and all 75s within reach join in. . . . . The battery position is getting more and more dangerous.

March 22, 1918 (diary).

Up at 5 o'clock to see that there was a man at each gun and that the one there wasn't asleep. . . . . Leuilly, at our feet, shelled all the morning; big ones and little ones. . . . . Went out this afternoon to look up some surveying points. Scrambled around Leuilly for a long while, and got four or five.

March 23, 1918 (diary).

Alerte gas 2 A. M. . . . . Started measuring P. M., when one burst 20 yards away. Never even heard it coming. All surveying off for the moment, the telephoniste having dropped all instruments and fled for the abri. . . . .

March 24, 1918 (diary).

Surveying again all the morning. Pretty well scared all the time. . . . . 6 P. M. They've just dropped about twelve big ones into Leuilly. The 6th Battery, behind us, immediately got word to fire about a hundred onto the German lines. This done, the Germans give us a 15-minute dose of 105s; we, who hadn't fired a round all day long.

March 24, 1918.

I am very, very happy. . . . . Am learning fast and like the artillery more and more. It is a real satisfaction to feel that I have fired against Germany,

a satisfaction that I could not feel in the Ambulance. It's the difference between watching a ball game and playing one.

We live in a little hole 'way down in the ground, eat there as well. The eating has been very good, sleeping also. I get up at five every morning now, to look things over and see that no one is asleep. The big attack is on and we are all confident. . . . . I know that you must feel rather broken up over our Saullie going away to war. Oh! How I hate Germany for it! I don't think there was ever a better man in the world than Saullie.

March 25, 1918 (diary).

The English have had a bad blow. . . . . The cannonade, distant four days ago, sounds almost close now. Something has got to be done. That is the reason why we are firing quite a bit, for a couple of days. Another C. P. O. this evening. The position is becoming nastier and nastier.

March 26, 1918 (diary).

More bad news from the English. Boches at Ham, Noyon, Bucy, Bapaume and 12 km. from Albert. Am entirely lost as to what it all means. . . . . We have been told to look up new positions 4 km. in the rear.

March 28, 1918.

Everything fine with me, but I can't think of anything but what is going on up north. Do not be too anxious. . . . .

March 31, 1918.

We have never been nearer the edge than we have been this last week, much nearer, I think, than any newspaper will ever say. But now everything is safe, and

the game is won. The advance is not to be taken as a sign that the Germans are superior. They attacked us with over three times the forces opposed to them, nor can any one say that the English should have forseen the blow. . . . .

April 6, 1918.

I was made very happy today by the arrival of your letter of March 4th, the first one in several weeks. How wonderful it is to get news from home. Have now been here over two weeks and am fast learning the "metier" of artillery. It has been everything I had hoped it would be, and a lot more. . . . .

The life is either very quiet, or very active, and varies from day to day, and from minute to minute. Up to a few days ago time almost hung heavy on our hands. I taught the Captain English, and he taught me observation; a round of bridge after each meal. Within five minutes' time everything changed, and for two nights I haven't taken off my clothes and have had but three hours' sleep. The prospects for tonight do not seem much brighter. It has given me an outlook on the war I could have gotten in no other way. But even the trying moments have their compensations. The big German offensive goes on, but its force is broken. I do not underestimate our losses, nor exaggerate theirs; but we are certainly nearer to winning the war than we were before it started. Montdidier is a blow, but the last word has not been said. . . . . I am very glad that Saullie is happy to go. But never fear. We will all be back, and I think we will all be the happier for it in the end.

April 8, 1918 (diary).

Yesterday was an awful seance. At 5.30 I got up to got to the P. O. [Poste Observatoire]. . . . . Early in

the P. M. there was a marmitage of our trenches at Cournal, and shortly afterwards the mitrailleuse started and did not stop till 8 P. M. . . . . The Boches started bombarding everywhere. . . . . The 150s made an awful roar and shook our poor little P. O. something awful. . . . . Eclats all over the place . . . . It took all I had in me to stay on guard at the P. O. opening. . . . . At 4.30 every cannon of ours within range started on barrage Cournal. What a glorious sound the 75 makes! When one is just far enough off, so that the départ is not a roar, but a sound, it is musical.

April 8, 1918.

Have seen more war during the past week than I saw in a year and a half in the Ambulance; Verdun and Monastir thrown in. I realize more and more what a nasty business it all is. It is all right as long as you can stay in your burrow, but when you have got to go outside, where it's falling all around, it is no fun at all. We've had a little bit of everything, including gas; and, believe me, I put my lunch so fast after one mouthful I got of the gas, that I might have just as well not eaten. Have been awfully lucky three or four times. Was caught outside making the rounds yesterday morning—couldn't go in any direction—so crawled into a shell hole and stayed there until it was over. . . . .

Don't you worry about my taking any chances. It isn't done. Anybody that can stay inside doesn't take a single step outside unless he has to. Am very, very happy to be with the French. They have certainly treated me wonderfully. Am still very green, but am learning as fast as possible. It is all a glorious experience. . . . .

April 13, 1918.

Have been sleeping days and working nights lately, and usually from midnight on have been figuring out

barrages; and, believe me, when you've done one or two in a row, and figured in all the atmospheric corrections, and then gone out in the night and done a little surveying with an electrically lighted goniometer, calculus is the last thing in the world to soothe your mind with. . . . .

In the last week we have been having a frightful time. We had a three-hour barrage, when the Boches were shooting up our place with 155s, and it took all the will power I had to stay at the guns while it was going on. Not only that, but they put in a few big ones, too, one of which landed ten yards in front of our guns while we were firing. You can judge of the size of it by the hole it made, 10 feet deep and 25 feet across. Of course, with those big ones everything goes right up in the air; so, unless it falls on you, you are all right; but the shock was something indescribable. I just leaned up against the wall with my mouth open, unable to move hand or foot for a few minutes. . . . . I am watching anxiously the great offensive.

April 13, 1918.

I command the third and fourth guns, and when I stand back of them during a barrage the noise they make gives me a thrill of pleasure, that shows, after all, I'm a very small boy. Don't worry about the offensive.

[April 15, 1918, the battery retreated to Juvigny.]

April 22, 1918.

Everything fine and going well. Never was better off in my life, nor enjoyed the work more.

April 22, 1918.

Would like to know who it was who put in a plea of exemption for her son because he was afraid to go. I wonder if there is anyone in the world who isn't afraid. . . . .

I may be wrong to be so bitter, but if America could only realize all the hopes that France and England have built on her. Both are tired, and Germany stronger than ever. . . . . Perhaps you remember Binnie's last fight, when he came home all mangled, and we placed him as comfortably as we could under the kitchen table. If you saw the faithful look in his eyes and the cry of help in them to us, you will understand the analogy in the case of France and America today. . . . .

I wonder if you can realize what pride I take, to stand behind a 75 and to give the orders for a barrage. What a glorious sound it is, the noise of the four guns firing as rapidly as they can, and the six figures before you in each of the gun pits working in unison, each one doing his one thing and helping put 50 shells a minute in the German trenches. We fired one day for three hours at top speed; a day of attack, when the Boches had our position cold, and sent almost as many shells onto our plateau as we sent out ourselves. They landed all around, before, behind and on both sides. What had been a wood before was afterwards a pile of splintered logs and upturned earth; everyone terrified, a fright unimaginable; but I don't think anyone would have changed places with any living being. I shall never forget a minute of it. Nor is there any happier feeling than the exaltation you feel at such moments, in spite of the fear. The six blue figures before you, back and forth, back and forth; the thought of what is going on in the trenches; there is nothing like it in the world. The next day we learned that not one German had passed through the barrage. What wouldn't I give to sit around the fire and talk it all over with you! However, that day will come. . . . .

May 1, 1918.

I like the artillery more and more and am getting to do more and more things; and, now that I know the

men and they know me, it is becoming easier and easier. For us everything is tranquil for the moment; a very pleasant change from the furnace of mid-April. . . . .

May 14, 1918.

Everything seems scarce these days, even something to do. Everything is so tranquil that I am getting very lazy. . . . . However, a sense of the romantic has always helped me to appreciate everything that goes on, whether it be mud, and rain, and boredom, or the trying moments. I remember one rainy night, when we had to move back. It was after our worst time, when everyone was all in. I took the fourth gun to the new position. It was a pitch-black night, raining steadily, the mud reaching to the hubs; six horses ahead with three riders on the left, a brigadier (corporal) in the lead, and the six servants of the gun and myself, in a drowsy heap on the front seat. Not a sound but the steady ooze of the mud, as it recedes and then fills in again as the wheels turn. Mile after mile through the blackness, every one soaked, but too exhausted to mind; it was a wonderful moment to me. Wonder if I will ever see such big times again. What a privilege to be alive in 1918.

Had the diversion not long since of constructing a position all my own. I worked during the bad weather, when there were no balloons up, did all the surveying, put the gun in direction and prepared the fire. What a great sound it was, when, one night, lying in bed, I heard my gun barking away in the distance and I knew just where those shells were falling in the Boche lines. . . . . I expect the offensive will start in again soon, but am confident that they will not get anywhere with it. As everyone else is confident, too, there's no use worrying about losing the war. . . . .

Sunday, May 19, 1918.

We are still very quiet in our old stone quarry. . . . . Have built a sort of pagoda high up on one of the walls. . . . . The four black guns poke their muzzles through the camouflage and are ready to pour out 40 shells a minute at 45 seconds notice; but as it is, everything is tranquil, too tranquil not to maintain everyone on edge. . . . . The Captain does his best to learn English, but as the only book at our disposal is Goldsmith's "Deserted Village," I often strike snags on such phrases as:

> One only master grasps the whole domain,
> And half a tillage stints thy smiling plain.

May 22, 1918 (his last letter).

Everything is very, very quiet here. The Boches leave us entirely alone, and we only fire when there are no saucisses up. Am perfectly confident as to the defeat of the next German offensive. Perhaps it may not come off at all. I would like to know what really happened to the 5th British Army.

DIARY FOR HIS LAST DAY.

May 27, 1918.—Midnight. Chausto with paper indicating projected German attack 12 night.

12.30—Work out C. P. O.'s.

12.45—Violent bombardment starts in on all the front. Battery finds itself deluged fore and aft with 105 and 75. Gas smell immediately.

1.00 A. M. [28th]—Barrage. Acted as tireur. All telephone wires cut. Gas everywhere. Automobiles and motorcycles whiz by in the night.

1.00—Rebarrage.

1.15—Rebarrage.

1.20—Rebarrage.

1.45—Rebarrage.

2.00—Rebarrage.

2.15—Rebarrage.

2.30—Cadence ralenti.

3.00—No news of groupe. Three telephonists sent out, and not one comes back. Bombardment increases steadily towards dawn.

4.00—Renforts 403 flow by across country.

4.30—Barrage.

4.45—Barrage ralenti. Dash out to the guns and back to P. C. constantly. Sondage. Interdiction to eat all food not hermetically sealed from gas. Brouillard. 6th starts firing. I order barrage. 3 batteries on left see us firing, and make barrage themselves.

7 o'clock—New barrage, indicating German advance.

7.30—New barrage. Germans capture Mt. des Tombes; up to our old position.

8.25—Counter-attack. Push Germans back to crest. Have to stay outside to be with battery, and double guetteurs, but an awful ordeal. Iron everywhere, and nose swollen.

Up to 10 A. M. 900 shells fired.

New barrage showing German retreat. 10.15 A. M.

11 A. M.—New barrage. Strong wind blows away most of gas. For eight hours did not take off mask.

11 o'clock—German plane very low over us.

12 o'clock—First 130 is heard. From then on 1c/2m in the battery.

12.15—Eat bread and singe and white wine.

12.30—Prepare barcelment.

12.45—1st tir barcelment.

13.00—105's radinent autour.

13.15—Dash out to 3 P to give Schoul a tir. Both standing behind the gun, and 130 bursts 2 yards in front. Schoul gets 8 pieces in his skin. I was not troubled.

13.30—Standing outside, watching bandaging of Schoul, 130 bursts 4 metres away. Billier, 2 metres away from me, gets three fragments.

13.45—Quieter on all sectors.

Lord, how tired.

[He was seriously wounded in the left leg about 5 P. M. of the 28th, but was able to drag himself to the abri, where, with his Captain, who had been wounded at the same time, he received medical attention. At 1 A. M. he was removed to Chavigny, and from there to the hospital at Fontenoy, where he died about noon of the 29th. The letter of M. Baron (post) gives the circumstances of his death.]

XIX

Addenda

Le Coudray-Plessé, May 29, 1919.

My dear Mr. Clark:

I am writing in the thought that this letter may bring some consolation to a family, tried, as I too have been affected, and because I would like to express as well as possible, with my pen, the sentiments of my heart. For a long time, doubtless, what would you not have given to have details of the last moments of him whom you weep for, and whom I myself weep for; since, if he had lived, we both of us would gladly have called each other by the sweet name of brother.

I finally reach you, after having, through many attempts been able to procure your address, which I desired so much to know. I have secured this through Major Galatti's secretary, to whom the Colonel of the 28th R. A. C. had me instructed to communicate these details, Major Galatti having left for the United States. I hasten, therefore, to write you directly, begging you at the start to accept for yourself and your family my most sincere condolences.

The 29th of May! A year, to a day. I was at the time a hospital attendant in hospital 14/13, which at that time, on account of the very critical situation, was relieving the excessive calls upon H. O. E. B/51. The German offensive, let loose on the night of the 26th/27th, was going full force; the wounded were arriving in great numbers; and, alas! the news they brought us was not at all of the most reassuring kind; and it was on this Wednesday morning toward half past six that Coleman was brought to us. Poor child—in what a pitiable condition he was. His left leg had been shattered by a big shell fragment and he was almost bloodless.

Pale, he was of that color which death knows how to paint upon its victims, and the Major [Chief-Surgeon] only gave him a few moments to live. A tourniquet kept within him those few drops of blood which gave

M. Baron

his heart just enough force to beat gently. But the operation—because it was necessary to cut off his leg—was impracticable. Oh! What would we not have done to try and save this child—the first American who had come into our hands! The Major immediately thought of a transfusion of blood; and, knowing my devotion, had me summoned. "Monsieur Baron," said he to me, "this poor little soldier is lost. Would you like to try and save him? You are strong, and if you are not afraid, I will open an artery in your arm to take blood from it and give it to him."

I wept for joy, so happy was I to be able to give life to someone; and I assure you that my thought went out to you, to his family, for whom I might be able to save him. I laid myself out on an operating table beside him. I stretched out my right arm. The Major made an incision in it, uncovered the artery, opened it, and on seeing my blood flowing and mounting in the glass prepared for Coleman I could no longer contain myself. While this was going on another surgeon was preparing your son's arm. Our brotherhood was quickly sealed.

This transfusion having been finished, these gentlemen were able to operate on him, whom I was anxious to see henceforth on his hospital bed, to care for myself, and to be the happy witness of his recovery.

Toward 8 o'clock the operation was finished and was very successful. Coleman was resting calmly and not suffering much, as he himself said, and I myself, not too exhausted, was seated beside him in a reclining chair. Every one passing before the cot smiled, reflecting on what I had done, which many others would have been happy to do, and above all on seeing the young American coming to life again.

Alas! The good fortune was not to last long. Toward ten o'clock a shell fell beside us, which was soon followed by several others. We were being bombarded. The

Boches were advancing. It was necessary to retreat. Things were so grave that orders were not slow in coming: "Evacuate the wounded; leave as little material as possible in the hands of the Boches." As to myself, being unable on account of the operation to carry anything whatsoever, or to render the least service—they had me put into a wagon, which took me without breaking the journey, 40 kilometres to the rear. Oh! what it cost me to separate from Coleman! Alas, later I learned from my comrades that the little American, as they called him, had not survived this additional disturbance, and that he had died before they were able to evacuate him.

He was buried the same day, with five other soldiers, in the little military cemetery of Ambleny-Fontenoy. This cemetery is located eight kilometres west of Soissons, on the left-hand side of the national highway, which goes from that city to Compiègne. I have not returned to these places since then; therefore I cannot tell you in what state the grave is; but if the bombardment has not caused too great damage there it should certainly be well preserved.

To this short account I have therefore nothing to add. I pray God, as I have already prayed to him, to give you the courage to bear valiantly this affliction, and if I can please you by extending to you some consolation through this little letter, I am sufficiently recompensed for it.

As for myself, if it would be of any interest for you to know who I am, I will tell you that before the war, for fifteen years, I was a Catholic missionary in Egypt. Mobilized at the very beginning, I went through the whole war as a hospital attendant, with untransportable soldiers—that is to say, the most gravely wounded. Demobilized since the 17th of February, I am expecting to leave very soon for my mission, and if I can please you by sending you this modest photograph I am very glad

to do so. I would be very happy myself to receive one of him whom we weep for, but who, I hope, enjoys the happiness of the elect near the good God. If you should answer my letter, tell me at the same time how you are, whether Mme. Clark is alive, whether you have other children. To all extend my kindest regards. Believe me, dear Mr. Clark,

Your entirely devoted,

M. BARON.

I cannot tell you how deeply moved I was, when I heard a few days ago of your boy's death. . . . . It seems too unkind and too cruel to destroy a life so young and gentle as was his. . . . . I am sorry you could not see him these last two years, for he grew up, expanded and broadened out to a remarkable extent. . . . . I know also that he was so whole-heartedly devoted to France that he cannot have one moment regretted, being on the Roll of Honour, and on our own also. . . . . I used to be in charge of his section in the American Ambulance, and I never knew a man who so completely won the affection and respect of every one; always bright and cheerful, ever ready to do more than his share, gentle and kind, never out of temper, plucky and courageous, always a gentleman; he rang true as steel. . . . . I hope you will find consolation in the glory of his death and in the fact that he fell fighting for what we all believe to be right, and that he would have wished no other end. Of that I am certain. And, a man strong in heart and spirit, he was prepared to face calmly and quietly the closing moments of his life. . . . .

LOVERING HILL,

[Leader of Sec. 3.]

I have delayed writing you so that I could have some information about Coleman's death to send you. . . . The Captain of the battery, who was killed at the same time, had proved himself to be a great friend of your son. . . . . I had been in the same ambulance section with your son, and I know that I can speak for all the other men who have ever been associated with him over here, in telling you that there was no one who gave himself more faithfully to the cause of the Allies, and at the same time gained the respect and affection of everyone who was connected with him in any way.

STEPHEN GALATTI.

Probably as you knew him and as I knew him he was very different. He was only a boy when he came over, and he was grown up at the end. But he kept all that you must have loved in him. It was what I cared for, too. . . . . You probably never knew from him how fond we all were of him. . . . . I wish I could see you. . . . . and tell you all that he had done over here—and there isn't one thing, in all the horror and rottenness of war, that you wouldn't be proud of. He was brave, and sweet, and cheerful; above all, straight and clean from the beginning to the end. He did very finely in his battery—that I know—and though I know nothing of his death I don't need to. It must have been something we can be proud of.

JOHN W. CLARK [Sec. 3].

By the way, a Yale fellow, class of 1918, Coleman Clark by name, was killed in the recent Rheims-Soissons push in this same regiment, which suffered heavy losses. The way the Colonel speaks of him here—his having

gone down from chief of two guns to charging and firing, as fast as his men fell, kind of gives Jim and me something to work for. I wonder where Clark lived in the States. I should like to write his folks to at least tell them of what the French Colonel said about him.

BERT W. SAUNDERS.

A splendid scholar, a true friend, and a boy with a mind that made his presence felt wherever he was. He would have been a big man some day. . . . . How we used to struggle over Freshman mathematics together, he trying to help me, as he did every one else needing a hand.

JOHN H. MASON, JR.

The news deeply affected us. Clark lived with the officers, and all esteemed and liked him. He was very couragous and an excellent companion, who knew how to make himself of use. . . . . It is a loss to the Groupe that will be greatly felt.

CAPT. MOREL,
28th Regt. Art., 3d Grp.

[Brother of Capt. Maurice Morel of 2d Grp.]

I knew your brother very well and could appreciate his charming character as well as his fine moral qualities. His death is a real loss to us, his comrades, as well as to his men, whose confidence and respect he had won by his courage and devotion.

B. DE GUIGNE,
28th Art., 5th Bat., 2d Grp.

All through he had lived, I know, as few men do here, and kept an enthusiasm and moral integrity as keen as ever. He was a wonderful chap.

JAMES TODD.

ORDRE DE LA DIVISION NO. 120.

57émé Division.

Le Colonel Colin, Commandant Provisoirement la 57e Division d'Infanterie, cite à l' ORDRE DE LA DIVISION, les militaires dont les noms suivent:

CLARK, COLEMAN, volontaire de la Section Sanitaire No. 3; a fait preuve d'un dévouement aux blessés, et d'un courage digne de tout éloge; en particulier devant Verdun en juin, 1916, à proximité immédiate, et sous le feu continuel, de l'ennemi; puis, dans les évacuations difficiles du Bois-le-Prêtre dans l' été 1916, et de Monastir en décembre 1916 et janvier 1917.

Janvier 20, 1917.

151e D. I.
Artillerie.

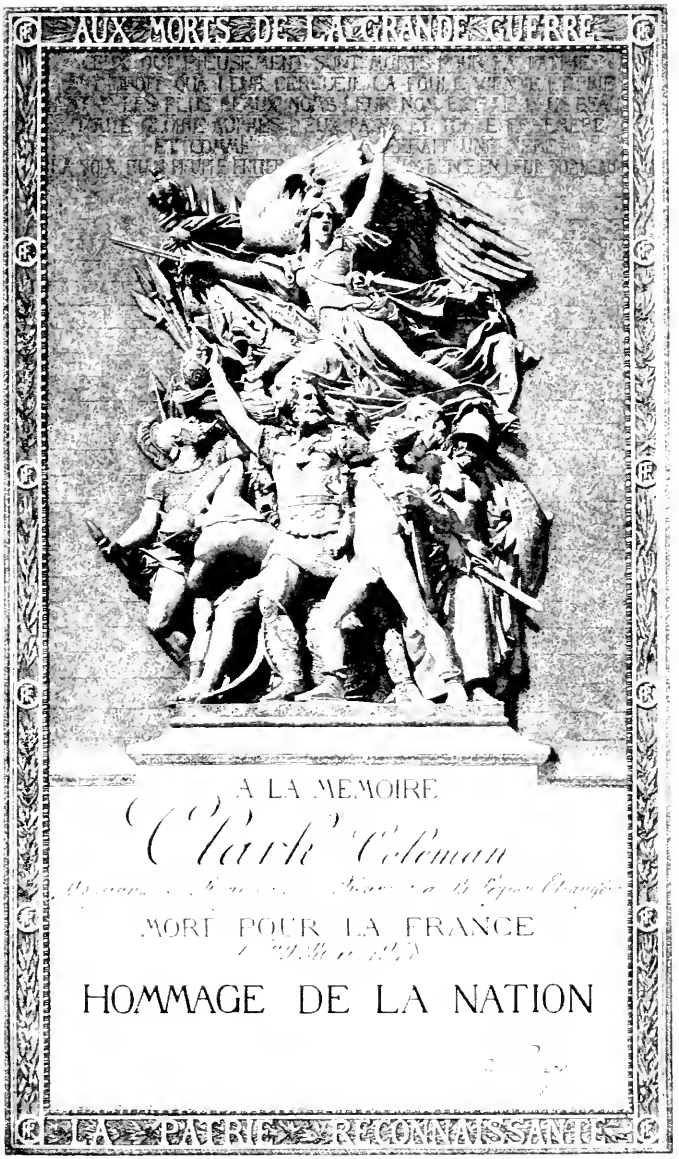
ORDRE NO. 230

de l'Artillerie de la 151e Division
en date du 8 Août 1918.

Le Lieut. Colonel Commandant l' A. D./151 cite à l' ordre de l' Artillerie Divisionaire les militaires dont les noms suivent.

28e Regiment d' Artillerie de campagne.

CLARK, Coléman Télestin, Aspirant 5me Bie, volontaire Américain, engagé dans l' Armée Francaise. Blessé mortellement à son poste, le 28 Mai, alors que sa batterie faisait face à une attaque rapprochée.



From the French Government 1919.

SALTER

Chronology: Salter

Sept. 20, 1890—Born at Yonkers, N. Y.

1904-1905—One year at school in Paris.

June, 1912—Graduated, Yale College.

1917—Made several applications for admission to Officers' Training Camps; refused on account of eyesight.

Feb'y 26, 1918—Left for Camp Dix as member of National Army; three months at Camp Dix.

May 19—Sailed from New York.

May 31—Landed at Liverpool.

June 1—Arrived Folkstone.

June 2—Arrived Calais; 2½ months' training with British (Pas-de-Calais).

Aug. 20-22—By rail, across Northern France to Passavant (Haute Saône), passing Amiens, Paris, Château-Thierry, Epernay and Châlons; 1 week at Passavant.

Aug. 28-30—March to Breuvannes; 5 days there.

Sept. 4-5—March to Viocourt (near Châtenois); 5 days there, equipping for combat.

Sept. 10-12—75 miles, marching and by camion, to St. Mihiel Salient, near Pont-à-Mousson.

Sept. 16—Went into the lines; 2 weeks under shell fire, in support.

Oct. 5—March and by camion to Argonne Forest.

Oct. 15—Went into the lines near Grand-Pré.

Oct. 18—Went into front line.

Oct. 19—Killed in attack on the Ferme des Graves. Died on the field. His grave is No. 29, Sec. 1, Plot 1, in the Argonne American cemetery, Romagne-Sous-Montfaucon, (Meuse).

Salter: Senior at Yale: 1912

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I.

CAMP DIX.

*Nov. 11, 1917.**

I am glad you like it. You are doing a lot for the family as well as for the country. People are beginning to realize more and more over here that the war is the biggest thing in the country today, and that those who are in it are doing the biggest work that can be done. I am sorry that I could not get in either of the training camps, and would have willingly gone with the National Army in the draft, for that matter. As it is, I may get over there yet; we are looking for the war to last two or three years, any way. . . . . We are certainly proud of you and Coey.

Camp Dix, Feb. 27, 1918.

Well, here I am, almost a soldier. I haven't yet taken any oath, but do as I'm told, just the same. Everything has run off very smoothly, and I am getting along fine. . . . . Have started a list of things to get the next time I come home. The first is a whisk broom, and the second some russet polish, as the first lesson in the army is personal appearance.

By the time we arrived at Camp Dix we had a fourteen-car train. We stopped at Orange, East Orange, Harrison, Newark, and Matawan, to pick up recruits. There were brass bands at every station and jams of people. All the locomotives gave us a whistle, too, all

*From a letter written from home to Carolus, his brother, who, like Coleman, had volunteered in the American Field Service, and was driving a camion on the French front with the "Rèserve Mallet."

along the way. It was a fine send off; but it took a Baptist dominie to put his foot in it. Evidently the old parson had gotten himself all worked up, a great deal more so than I or the rest of us. At any rate, he ended by saying that he hoped to place wreaths over the graves of heroes (gracious!).

Upon getting off the train we were lined up, bag and baggage, and sent through the inoculation tent. . . . . While standing around, Eddie McMahon says, "Well, boys, it looks as if they had plenty of men around here; let's go home." . . . . Dinner and breakfast were nothing which you couldn't buy at any high class hotel in New York, but we had pork and beans today for lunch, so everything is lovely.

I am going to play this game of being a private for all it is worth. Expect to open the old French grammar this afternoon, after six years.

Just a word about the draft crowd. They are a rough and ready bunch, but I have yet to hear the first murmur of unreadiness to be in the army, desire to go home, or discontent at anything. There is a fine happy spirit everywhere, and not least with me.

Camp Dix, Mar. 3, 1918.

Two things have impressed me in the army life. One is that we are not our own boss, do everything under orders. I don't mind it so long as Germany is our objective, but as a steady diet it wouldn't suit me. The other thing is, that a private has to wait in line; waits in line to go to mess three times a day; waits in line to wash his combination mess kit after each meal; waits in line to wash in the morning. I never waited so much, so long, or so often in my life. . . . . Everything is all right, however, waits, orders, and everything else thrown in. I wouldn't want to be anywhere but in the army now until the end of the war.

Mar. 18, 1918.

There doesn't seem to be any doubt but that I'll stay. Last Wednesday I was mustered in regularly with the rest. In fact, there hasn't been any hesitation on the part of the authorities down here. The army seems to have realized at last that this is no time for drawing fine lines. Many of the bunch who came down with me had previously been rejected for minor reasons: neutral heart (whatever that means), flat foot, eyesight, weight, etc. . . . .

I am perfectly satisfied down here. I have lived in better company, but after all we are all out to do the same thing, and that consciousness is an elevation for every one. About the commission part, I am interested in learning a private's job, and feel the rest can take care of itself. I would rather be in the ranks over in France than an officer over here, anyway.

I came down here with the idea that I wasn't going to smoke any more, but I find I am smoking a great deal more instead. Everybody says the same thing. It is a part of the army feeling, a feeling of being torn loose from everything. The private has this feeling particularly, because he does only what he is told to do, and has nothing else on his mind. Another aspect of it is, that it is the great adventure. No matter what one's motives are as to the war, this careless, reckless feeling is inseparable from the life.

My first impressions as to the morale of this army continue. It is a good crowd; good spirits and friendliness everywhere; if any one feels differently it does not show and is never heard. Every one is willing to drill and anxious to do it right. . . . .I am getting from 8 to 9½ hours sleep every night, which I haven't done since I was a baby.

Mar. 24, 1918.

This week has been the most interesting so far. For the past four days I have been going to the automatic rifle school every morning. This does not mean that I am going to be in a machine gun squad, as I may be used later to instruct in the mechanism. . . . . It is extremely interesting, as we go into the innermost workings; so far it has been instruction in mechanics. We have an Italian in my barracks who has a tenor voice. I tried some songs over with him. It was a pleasure for me, as he had the temperament and feeling of a person who likes and appreciates what he is singing. He sang O Sol Mio, Sweet Marie, and would have sung the Pagliacci prelude if I could have played it—all in the real Italian style.

April 13, 1918.

It was good to hear that you had heard from Carolus. I wrote a letter to him this week, also one to Coey. I suggested that we all three use 11 Rue Scribe as a general clearing house. . . . . It will certainly be a great occasion if we should happen to get together sometime in Paris.

Yesterday was inspection day. The Major took one look at our room, and said it was in no condition to inspect. This was as much as bawling out the captain, so that captain got back on us by cancelling all passes for two weeks. . . . . Thanks to Harry Parker, I am going to take up a course of instruction in scouting work—it is called intelligence service, and may result in my being detached from Co. A. Harry will make a regular soldier out of me in time. I am anxious to take it up; it is an honor to be selected. It will involve map making, and my French may possibly be overhauled and put into service.

One rainy afternoon I rustled sacks of oats for the 311th's mules, and took good care to give those mules' feet plenty of room to exercise in. Two of our men were told to water some of the mules: they refused. Yet they are willing to face the Boche, and I can understand it perfectly.

April 18, 1918.

I seem to have been definitely detached to take up this intelligence work. . . . .The work is very interesting, and will be also exciting. It consists of scouting, patrolling, observing and sniping. . . . . The other afternoon was warm and clear: we went out a few miles reconnoitering; noticing the roads, bridges, streams, hills, woods, looking out for camp sites, which must be near water, fuel, and shelter; looking for machine gun positions, battery sites, and good spots to entrench. It is a scout's duty to note all of these things, keep covered and at the same time in touch with the enemy.

It was great to get out without a coat; and there was something romantic in it all, when I remembered that the last time I was out in the country, I had a fishing-rod over my shoulder. We even stopped along the road to get some pop.

Apr. 22, 1918.

Just a line before I go out with the Intelligence Section on a scouting and patrolling practice this afternoon. . . . .In trench warfare most of this section's duties will be observation, and a good part of the observation is checking up the artillery. This is regular artillery work, and I will be glad to get into it. . . . . Two years ago the allied armies themselves had no distinct organization for this work.

They have nicknamed the division the Lightning Division, which isn't so bad.

Camp Dix; Apr. 25, 1918.

I know what Coey meant when he said home was never far away. Down here, and it must be especially so abroad, one looks at everything not connected with the war, as from a peak; and all the little things fade away, leaving home and friends outlined. . . . .We heard a rumor that this regiment will not move for a couple of months. We have a full number of men, but they do not know much about drilling. . . . .I have been somewhat disappointed in the spirit shown, but I believe the talk is only on the surface, and when it comes to a show-down they will all be there. . . . .The intelligence work keeps me busy all day, and we are having 3 classes a week. This week we have been drawing maps, and locating points.

II

GOING OVER THERE

April 30, 1918.

The intelligence work still goes on, and takes up all my time. . . . .I am picking up French fast: woke up the other night, and realized I had been thinking in it while dreaming. Many words and phrases come back with a certain familiarity, and often I can remember our using them in France.

May 12, 1918.

Preparations for something are going on down here every day. Today we are having inspection for Equipment C, foreign service. . . . .Personally I am all ready to go. The novelty is beginning to wear off the life here. Also the dust is getting thicker and thicker. .

The big thing is to actually get in and help, where the help is wanted. I have never lost sight of that for a moment, and it helps a lot, when things don't go as you would like to have them. I am very well satisfied, and learning something new every day in line with my job. When I get through I'll be able to do surveying work, on a small scale. The other day we got out on a hillside, and did sketching, estimating ranges to different targets. I never thought, when I last had drawing in the Petit Lycée Condorcet, that I would ever be actually using it, and probably in France.

May 14, 1918.

I feel now that the real thing is about to commence. I am very glad to with this Co., as they are the ones I

Camp Dix, N. J.

know. I realize how big a job it all is, and besides the excitement, there is a lot of satisfaction in helping to keep decency on the earth.

May 18, 1918. (diary) Friday.

Ever since Wednesday we were sure we were going somewhere, probably this week. The Colonel made a speech to the regiment after Retreat Wednesday, saying we were going overseas; to entrain Sunday morning. The Colonel strikes me as being a quiet, thoughtful man, very painstaking, and very much of a gentleman. From then on we did little or no drilling. Intelligence school was discontinued. . . . . Heard two jolly good good-bye talks at the Y. M. C. A. One was a talk by a Mr. Wright, about "Have you got the Makings?" The end of the other was "You're on your own." . . . .

We got aboard the train at about 12 midnight, and pulled out at 5 a. m. I slept on a seat, and slept at that. It was a sombre going out. No cheering crowd to see us off; cars dark when we left; every one who could sleep with a pack on, was asleep. We arrived at Hoboken 7:30 a. m., transferred to a ferry-boat "Washington." and docked alongside the S. S. Nestor. By noon Sunday we had moved out, and were going down the river. My first impression of troop quarters was awful; dirty, crowded. There were dirty heaps of straw lying around, and the deck was greasy. We all got nice new hammocks, however, which helped out a lot.

**Folkstone, June 1, 1918.*

Just had a wonderful trip across old England.

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*All extracts from this point to the end are from letters.

France, June 3, 1918. [*near Calais*].

I will never forget our trip across England to France. We slept but little, and ate cold, but it was interesting all the way. I can hear distant artillery now, and French airplanes are always buzzing overhead. I am in fine health and spirits. . . . .

III

TRAINING WITH THE BRITISH

[*Rety, near Marquise*] *June 7, 1918.*

We are now cantonnés in a beautiful section of the country, the companies quartered each in a little farm. The French people stay in the house, and we are everywhere else. . . . . Since I left the States I have slept in a hammock, on a mess table, in the sand, on the board flooring of a tent, on hay, and now on the good old sod. I believe I could sleep on a rock now. . . . .The other night we heard an air-raid on a near-by city [Calais] . . . . . Every time we are out on the road the kids come around, asking for something, crackers and money principally; they have a way of taking your hand, and insisting on walking along with the column. It is mighty hard to refuse sometimes; you say, "Non," then they say, "Mais, oui."

This is a beautiful region through here; long, rolling hills, with views of the countryside stretching out before you for miles; old stone houses, with tile roofs; and here and there a stone chapel. Everything is either old or very young. Women, boys, and old men work in the fields. The farm-house where we are located is kept by Belgian refugees who work it for the government; barn built into the house; from the outside it is hard to tell which part the cows and pigs live in. The war is hard on pigs over here, as there is no garbage for them; they eat grass all day long, and it keeps them busy.

The inns are filled with soldiers, English and American, but no French. Last night our regimental band gave a concert in the village square. They played Sou-

sa's "Stars and Stripes Forever," which sounded great; "Darktown Strutter's Ball," which is the most popular rag in the army; and ended with "God Save the King," "The Marseillaise", and "Star Spangled Banner. Americans stand at attention while the first two are played, and salute the third, always facing the music. The whole was very impressive, especially as it was done in that little square, with the chapel and graveyard on one side, and the two inns on the other. We are here for our own country, but when you're here in France, and see the women in mourning and the faded light blue uniforms of the French soldiers, I feel that we are here for France too.

[*Selles*] *June 17, 1918.*

I have been sent to the signal school, and have been here 3 days. . . . .Since writing you last Sunday we have moved up closer, perhaps 10 miles. I moved out with another fellow [Tom Pollard] two days ahead of the Co. on the baggage truck. We had a fine time. The first night we went down to a little village "pour goûter"; got into an ancient tavern, stone floor, big open fireplace, big enough for one of us to sit in each corner, with our backs against the tiles, and watch our eggs and chips cook. That night we slept in the barn of Jacques Leconte, a veteran of the war of 1870. He was greatly pleased to find I could talk with him, and he is always looking around for me now. He does everything he can for the company. . . . .He says France will never give up.

All the non-coms are going to various schools under British instructors—this signal school is one of them. I am learning the Morse international code, and can get about 4 words a minute so far. I don't know where this will lead to, but at least it is learning something.

I haven't heard anything about the intelligence work since we came over.

Living is rather rough. . . .Eating has been scarce, but is getting better. I am eating a great deal less than ever before, but don't mind it, and really feel fine.

June 23, 1918.

I am still in the signal school, and enjoy it very much. Bill Anderson, a man named Norloff, and myself, are together all the time. . . . .Congenial company makes all the difference in the world, in the ranks. . . . .Our school-house is in the orchard: every once in a while a cow or a pig will come wandering into a group, and look at us as if they wondered what we were doing in their pasture. . . . .

It is rather peculiar, but at home, before a map, and with two papers a day, the fighting seems ever so much nearer and more vivid than here, where we only see a paper once or twice a week. Also by the head-lines of the N. Y. papers, you see the seriousness of a Hun drive, but by the Paris and London papers, you have to look closely, and read the text, to know just what has happened; and then there are so many side comments, telling of small successes, that the real situation is lost. You know now, where the line runs, better than I. . . . Haven't heard from Coey yet.

Some of these gorillas in the army are fine fighting men, but it is a different proposition to be ordered around by them, and live with them. That is the only hard thing to stand. So far I haven't gone off the handle, but it has been hard work. I talk it all over with the others in the same fix as I am in, and we do some quiet, heavy cursing on the side, and then laugh off our luck. We are having a good time, even as buck privates.

June 30, 1918.

I actually feel rather ashamed at having so much money. In the same shops I buy things, there may be a French soldier who has seen two or more years' fighting, and I get more money in one month than he in one year; or a British soldier, who gets two francs a day to my five. The Australians however, get $1.50 to our $1.10 a day. There are a number of them around here, who came from Gallipoli.

I am getting on very well with this signal work and hope I can stay in it. It is a question of learning something from the beginning again, but it is a definite work which I know I can do. . . . . I realize, too, that this is only training and the real test will only come on the line, so I am going at it for all it is worth.

Here is that episode about the Major. The day we left I was chosen to look after the Major's baggage during the entrainment. . . . . After we got over here he called for me to act as his regular orderly (the English call them servants); I asked him to relieve me, which he did. Later the Colonel offered me the job, because I can speak French, and I promptly turned it down. It rather piqued me to be sized up for that kind of a job, but I guess they were looking at the French side of it.

I wish I could tell you where we are, but I cannot. We are out of any danger, and can only hear the guns rumble. Americans have never been on the front nearest to us.* A blimp hangs in the sky not far away, and looks as if it were painted there, as in a picture.

July 13, 1918.

I am still at the signal school, seemingly for an indefinite time. The work is progressing, and I feel able to take and receive messages, almost at the speed re-

*The Belgian front, Ypres, Armentières, etc.

quired at the front. It isn't so much a question of speed as of accuracy in reading and sending the messages, and a knowledge of the instruments in use, so as to be able to repair them in emergencies, and to set them up. I find that course in physics that I had in college is coming in handy; the old A. B. degree does help out after all.

[*St. Pol*]. *July 20, 1918.*

We have moved once more, this time to within 15 miles of the front. . . . . Yesterday was quite a day.

The signal school broke up the day before, so the four men from A Co. went back home. Yesterday morning we cleaned up all around, and got ready to move. Old Jacques Leconte was quite affected to see us go. He had been so helpful in every way, that the Co. took up a collection, I heard, of about 80 francs. Just before we left he installed himself on the kitchen stone step with a pail of cider; I guess almost everybody had a drink; it tasted exactly like that hard cider we got at Vitré. I will remember him; he was genuine; and I believe had a real feeling for us.

The day before, I saw him getting his hay in, with the help of his big white horse,—the one which would let only Madame put on the bridle—and his sister-in-law: that is going some at 72 years of age. . . . .

Some of the boys tried to kid themselves that we were going to Boulogne, but it wasn't long before it was only a question of looking out of the window, to be convinced that our course lay toward the front. We had never seen dugouts where we were staying, but pretty soon we could see them all along, with the Tommies living in them. At one point there were five observation balloons in a line, and two squadrons of airplanes. Toward the end we came to a city, I should imagine about the size of Plainfield. The station was in ruins, with

here and there a rusty "Chocolat Menier" still on the walls. The whole business section looked deserted, big round holes in the brick walls, and tiles shaken off the roofs everywhere. . . . . We learned that there had been a bombardment by artillery the night before. That is the first rumor that always starts when we get to a new place. At any rate the station was probably destroyed in the March drive, as a calendar was hanging up, with March still up.

The bunch was in unusually good spirits; yelled every time we passed through a good-sized town, and especially when an American soldier was in sight. Those we saw generally had a foolish grin on their faces; anything from America looks good to this crowd. I noticed some Carnegie Steel Co. rails, and they also looked friendly. . . . .

July 27, 1918.

With regard to Coey. I had been thinking of making some inquiries, so when you said that the last you had heard was a letter from him dated May 22, I decided to write his captain. I did this yesterday* . . . . .The signal school has started again, so I am not drilling with the Co.; although they are not more than half a mile from where I am. It looks now as if my job in the army would definitely be along these lines. There are four men to each company detailed to this work. . . . . In trench warfare it looks as if we would be installed in the Co. hdqts. dugout: in open warfare we stay near the captain, to do anything he says.

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*His first news of Coleman's death came in a letter, written from home July 3. That letter, with several others from home, he had in his pocket on Oct. 19, in his last action. Early in Nov. it was picked up on the battlefield near Grand-Prè by Lieut. Harry G. Parrish, and returned by him to the family.

July 29, 1918.

The nearer I get to the lines, the more does the whole surrounding country seem to be wrapped up in it, and hanging on it. We cannot appreciate how all-absorbing it is.

In the first place one never gets away from the army; of course, around here, the American and especially the British army. You walk along the streets, and in every direction are soldiers, tents, mules or horses. Every automobile that passes is a military car. In the air are always airplanes or balloons. There seem to be no passenger trains on the railroads; all the freight cars are filled with army stores, and the coaches with troops.

Every city I have been in has been half-deserted; very few French people on the streets; no delivery wagons; no hacks; stores closed up indefinitely; the estaminets and little shops always filled with soldiers. The only thing the people can talk about is the war. You go to a farm-house to get milk or eggs, and see on the dresser in the kitchen a picture of a French soldier. Many of the people around here sleep in dugouts, and I guess everybody who has the means has long since left. It has been this way, everywhere I have been in France; possibly because it looked this spring as if Calais and Boulogne might be taken.

Our fellows say they wouldn't give 30 cents for the whole country, but they have only seen the ground, not the French people, or French life. It is just as if the army had rented the whole of northern France, and the French had moved out. This is one side of war behind the lines, we didn't realize. . . . .

I was made a first class private this month.

Aug. 4, 1918.

I will write immediately to Stephen Galatti, to get more details about Coey's death. . . . .I was greatly re-

lieved to know that Mother was all right. It is hard to know that much of the sorrow of war is borne by those who love you. My heart is all the more in this war, now that Coey did everything he could. His example is, and has been always, before me. . . . .I'll be in it till the end.

I recently read a French book "L'Abbe Constantin," by Halévy, and came across a sentence which immediately put me in mind of that picture of Coey in his French Officer's uniform. Here it is: C'était un homme duquel se lisaient ouvertement sur les traits, la droiture, le courage, and la bonté." I can't help but compare him in spirit with Lafayette. . . . .I don't know exactly what kind of work I'll actually be doing in the line, but I'm satisfied to do almost anything, and let promotion take care of itself. I have made some good friends who are in the same way that I am, and we knock around together a good deal. . . . .

Yesterday there was an article in the paper which stated that soldiers behind the lines would be allowed to say where they were. I am at St. Pol, west of Arras; last month we were at Selles near Desvres, and came to that town from Rety near Marquise. . . . .

We and Coey made the great sacrifice, but it is not in vain. . . . .This is what war means. We can always be thankful for what he was, and for how he lived. . . .

Aug. 10, 1918.

Since writing you last week we have had a two days' trip, very near the front. We started out Monday morning, with full packs and one cooked meal. I was with the signal platoon of the Hdqts. Co., instead of with Co. A. The pack we now carry is not the first one we left Dix under, but much lighter: with full ammunition belt it weighs about 45 lbs. At first it rides well, and gives no trouble, and it is only after 3 or 4 hours march-

ing that it really begins to bother me. Then, with 5 to 10 minutes' rests every 40 minutes or so, it is not at all unbearable.

At noon we fell out along the road to eat lunch, consisting of cold beans, crackers, butter and jam. This makes a fine meal, and is all you want to eat when marching. . . . .At one point near the end of the march, we halted to let a tank crawl on to the road ahead of us. At different points we passed long trains of motor lorries, evidently lined up to make the trip to the front after dark.

Finally pulled into our bivouac at 6 P. M. in the rain; pitched tents; then I made a fire, which the whole platoon appreciated.* Mess never tasted as good as it did that night, almost in the dark, and in the drizzle. Every army meal I have had since leaving Calais has been in the open.

The next morning the signal platoon went into the trenches, where the battalion had been standing to, the previous night. I was in charge of A Company signal light station. I got the light set up on the parados of the trench, and got in touch with battalion hdqts., and the Co. on my left. After that it was a question of sitting there, waiting for anything that might come through. The only message that did come, came at about 6 P. M., and read, "Don't leave your station till relieved." That meant another wait, till 10:45. Our station got back to camp, in the dark, about 11:15, and we managed to get a cup of coffee and hash.

The line of trenches we manned were about ten miles back of the line, so of course we were in no danger. We could hear everything though, and at night signal lights and rockets were going all the time. Planes were passing over us in groups of 4, 8, 10 and even more.

*From a little boy he was always very fond of making fires, in the backyard, in the woods, everywhere.

A Boche plane flew over us after we got in that night, and must have dropped two bombs, though not near.

I am back with the Company, as the signal school has disbanded. I will always look back to the days of the school with pleasure. Bill Anderson, Norloff and myself stuck together, and had some mighty nice times.

The news in the paper is fine. The Allies have regained all the ground where Coey was.

[*Lathe-St. Quentin*]. *Aug. 17, 1918.*

We have moved again, and expect to move still again tomorrow. We have been waiting to go into the support trenches for training purposes, but I am afraid this new move has another end in view.* Every time we move food gets meagre. . . . .They have put a guard over the town pump, on account of typhoid. . . . As a further protection our quarters have been disinfected, and the typical French manure pile in the back yard has been cleaned up. The Americans leave a place looking better than they found it.

We were very lucky, in getting out of the other place. Two or three nights after we left, the Boches came over and dropped bombs on our old drill field in the woods, and suspiciously near to the old battalion and regimental hdqts. The place hadn't been raided like that since the drive of last March. It looked like underground work, but a little late.

As it is, we have plenty of excitement here, with Jerry coming over regularly at 9:30 P. M. . . . . For the past two nights I have gone up to the anti-aircraft battery up the road, and waited for something to happen. The first night it was just as if the whole

*Orders had actually come for them to enter the lines, with the British, near Arras; but they were suddenly countermanded, upon the adoption of the plan for an American army to make the great drive, at St. Mihiel.

performance had been planned beforehand. When we got there, there was quite a crowd on hand, including the Colonel. The English officers showed him the gun, shot off a practice shot, lit cigarettes, and began to chat, when the watch sighted a "bird." We were told to sit down, and keep quiet. The officer blew a whistle, and the English gun crew took positions on the run. Then I heard the Boche, a deep reverberating drone. We could not see him, but the hum got louder and louder. The searchlights began to shoot up into the sky, four of them. The officer gave the word, for the kind of barrage, and the range. There was a click in loading, some one yelled, and both guns let go . . . . .About 30 seconds afterward we heard the pops from the sky. The plane wasn't hit, but he turned off. We waited until another turned up, and the same performance carried on. Then we went to bed, just as if we had paid admission, and the show was all over.

It is fine to get so many letters from home. I received 15 last week: from all the family.

IV

ON THE MOVE, FROM THE WESTERN END OF THE BATTLE LINE WITH THE BRITISH TO THE EASTERN END WITH THE AMERICANS.

[*Passavant: Haute-Saône*], *August 24, 1918.*

Since writing to you last week a good deal has happened, all in a peaceful way however. We moved again, as I thought. I am writing this under a tree on a hillside, some 3 or 4 hundred miles from the last place. We must be about 50 miles from the front; no air-raids, no noise of cannon. It is a fine high country-side, nice-looking houses, with white walls and red roofs, and you see nice people. About the only war-like suggestion, is a ruined old town, with part of an old wall, set on top of a little hill right in front of me. It commands the fine road which runs past its base, and at some time must have belonged to some chevalier who paid homage to the Dukes of Burgundy.*

The ride down took two days, and they were the most interesting that I have spent, although very uncomfortable. We had 30 men living in one of those little French freight cars, which have 2 wheels on each side, and are marked "hommes 36, chevaux 8." It was one time in my life, that I would have liked to have been a horse. We slept right on the floor, and my ear

*Salter may have had in mind, in this reference, the castle of La Roche-Pont, in Viollet-le-Duc's "Annals of a Fortress": the imaginary site of which the author placed in this very region, Burgundy, on the upper Saône. Many an hour did the little boys, snug in bed, listen to the reading of that fascinating scientific, book on war; when war, as their own future, was farthest from their thoughts.

was exactly over the wheel. It sounded exactly like the engines of that boat we took from Washington to Jamestown. Sometimes my feet would be on the bottom, sometimes on the top of the pile. The first night there were 76 legs in that car. When your leg went to sleep, it was hard work finding it. In the morning we got a dixie full of hot water from the engine, and made tea. Also, at irregular intervals during the day, we would open up bully beef and hard tack, and call it a meal, with a little English jam. I didn't mind it while it lasted, but was very glad to get off.

The scenery, however, made up for everything. We entrained at 3 p. m., and at 10 a. m., of the next morning, I was looking on both sides for the church of Montmartre [Paris], but couldn't see it on account of the fog. The scenery along the road from 8 A. M. to 10 was something entirely different from anything this crowd has ever seen in France. I am glad they know that France is not all like the Pas de Calais section. We would see respectably dressed people on the station platforms, fine stone houses everywhere, neat gardens and back yards right down to the railroad track; it was just like England, except there is a little more color. I noticed that the majority of the women were wearing black. We were waved to and cheered, not only at every station, but by every last French man, woman, or child, who saw the train go by. I saw many a farmer, and many a woman working in the fields, stop to look and wave. The only thing that was missing was the flags. I have not seen more than two French flags displayed, and during our journey only one American flag, which a woman hung out of a 4th story window, as we were nearing the city. I remember last year how the crowds along Broadway cheered for France and Joffre. I am sure there is the same feeling over here for us. It is built on the feeling Coey had, and

it will last. As interesting as everything was in the morning, for me it couldn't compare with the afternoon.

The railroad took us straight along the line where twice in this war, the French, with their backs to the wall, have held, the last time with the Americans on their left. It must have been within ten miles of where Coey fell.

Some miles before we reached the real arena, we passed the memorial with the word "Lusitania" worked in flowers, and our flag. I believe Coey mentioned it. Perhaps passed it, too. As we approached closer, shell craters began to appear near the railroad, and I could see barbed wire. Then we came to a station, whose roof had been blown off, and several buildings near by shot up. I also remember that at that point there was a little graveyard, with little wooden crosses, and American flags over the graves. There we came into the line, where, not two months ago, if our train had gone the same way, I would have seen the Boches on one side of the track—left; and the French and Americans on my right. I thought of father, and how much he would have liked to take that ride with me.

It took us over three hours to cover the next 12 or 15 miles, and the train stopped every mile or so; so that I have an exact picture of that whole battlefield, just as it was then. They were then cleaning it up, but there was a lot left. I guess the topography of every decisive battle is about the same, and the tactics simple This one was a great deal like Gettysburg, but grander. On each side of the railroad runs a long range of hills, a little higher than the Watchung mountains, and three times as broad at the base, cultivated fields running in many places clear to the top, very little wood. Every mile or so there is a village perched up against the side, or on the top, very few straggling houses between. You

could easily count the villages from the train, looking up the valley. This is the way it was laid out, looking toward the German side.

Toward the French side it was very similar, but the ground was rough, there was more wood, less cultivation, not so many well-defined villages. From summit to summit it seemed to be about three miles. Straight through the centre, the river winds, one hundred or so feet wide, perhaps more, the railroad on the left bank, and 5 or 6 parallel roads, scattered. It must have been the old story of frontal attack on intrenched positions, the Germans coming down their hill and crossing the river, all under every known kind of fire. I can't imagine a better defensive position than the side the French held. From the top of the German hill to the river is about one or two miles, hardly a tree to obstruct the view, not even at the river bank, and those cultivated fields extending almost to the top; not a hillock or mound in between. The only shelter I could see would be in that succession of villages. Without exception, every one was shot to pieces; you could see a hole in every wall; the ruins looked like those pictures of the old Aztec villages, published in the Nat. Geographic magazine. They must have been first shelled by the Boches, then in turn by the French, from the other side of the river. I noticed the usual example, in such a scene, of poetic justice; squarely on top of the Boche hill was still standing a monument closely resembling the Statue of Liberty, the figure facing toward France. I would give anything to go over the ground with some one who had been there.

It seems to me, it must have been a good deal of a running fight, for, while there were shell-holes everywhere, the ground was torn up, to indicate an extended and continued barrage. The fact that the ground was fought over only a few days might also account for

this, and I guess the targets were men who could be seen. It was just what you would expect a recent battlefield to look like; trenches; barbed wire; hastily built dugouts, burrowed into the railroad cut or covered with railroad ties; trees cut off half-way by shells; holes everywhere, with the wheat growing all around; places leveled off in the railroad cut for gun emplacements; pontoons sunk in mid-stream, others drawn up on the bank, shot full of holes; shell-holes in the bed of the river; I saw a dead horse or mule in mid-stream; all the bridges destroyed except the abutments; Hun helmets here and there, articles of clothing, unexploded shells, one or two rusty machine guns. We brought a full magazine of a French automatic rifle into our car, with the spring broken. Here and there a grave marked with a small wooden cross. On top of the Boche graves, generally a helmet or cap, sometimes with a pair of shoes and a beer bottle. All that part was just what you would expect, even to the farmers who were cutting their wheat, and stepping out when they came to a shell-hole.

The whole thing was impressive, and would be to you all, as Coey was part of it, but probably his regiment didn't come into action as far south.

For the past few days we have been resting up. We seem to be a little ahead of our rations, so I have had the job of buying up meat and vegetables around the neighborhood.

Sept. 1, 1918.

We have moved again. Everybody said that place we were in last week was too good to last. We were just getting settled, had had one fine bath in the canal near by, and I had already found two places where you could buy eggs and potatoes, and have them cooked. In fact, with three others, I had arranged to get a goose cooked up with eggs and chips. We just managed to get in that

meal; it was fine. You buy things at different houses and then have it cooked somewhere else.

One morning, while I was asleep, the order came to pack up and join the Co. We packed extra stuff in squad rolls, to go on the limbers, packed our pack, and sat down, ready to move. We have become so used to it now that is no event to move. That afternoon we marched from 2 P. M. to 8 P. M.* and landed in the first barracks we have seen since Camp Dix—simply board bunks, on which you throw your slicker and blankets. You can't understand what a godsend those barracks seemed like. I slept like a top that night, with my gas mask for a pillow. That night we had dinner at nine o'clock. It was pitch-black, except for the flares of the Co. kitchens, all ranged in a row. The fellows lined up thick around the kitchens, clanking their mess kits, and talking about food, and the length of the march, where we were going the next day, wondering if there wasn't a Y. M. C. A. with chocolate near by; all tired out, but everybody feeling good at the prospect of hot soup and clear coffee. Not far off you could hear the horses stamping and drivers yelling. That's the army after a day's march.

The next day was a terror; from 9 A. M. to 6 P. M. with one hour out for lunch.* If we had only gone a little faster, I wouldn't have minded it, but the column just drooled along, so that you could hardly ever get into a comfortable stride. About the only scenery I saw was the hard white limestone French national highway. The only times we would make up would be passing through a village. If a girl was standing in a doorway, the yelling would begin, and you'd hear "Oh! La! La!" from all parts of the column. The girls are evidently used to it, and always come back with smiles.

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*From Passavant to Fresnes sur Apance, 20 km.
*From Fresnes sur Apance to Merrey: 31 km.

We are again in barracks, still further from the line. When we are going up nobody knows, but I would not be surprised, whether we go in a few weeks, or hang around for months. Training is getting tiresome.

Sept. 7, 1918.

I have heard from Lieut. B. de Guigné of Coey's regiment, and Dr. Georges Gendron, also of the same regiment, and am enclosing their letters. . . . . Don't let anything discourage you, mother. You wouldn't want me anywhere else but in France now.

We moved again, making a very hard night march from 9 P. M. to 5 A. M. and from 3 P. M. that same day to 9 P. M. that night.* I was all in at the end, but nowhere near to the falling-out point. When you can do all that, sleeping on the ground in between marches, and wake up the next morning without being stiff and only moderately tired, you are in good condition. The hard part of the whole thing is that pack.

I can't tell when you'll get my next letter, as there seems to be something in the wind.

*From Merrey to Viocourt, about 50 km.

Salter: Company Signalman: April 1918.

V

FIGHTING: ST. MIHIEL AND THE ARGONNE

[*Vieville en Haye*] *Sept. 16, 1918.*

Just a line to let you know I am all right. . . . . We have been continually on the move since the last time I wrote; night marches in the rain and mud, when it was so dark we marched hand in hand. Once we got into camp at 2 A. M., and not far away a heavy Allied barrage just started. I distinctly remember dropping off to sleep in the wet, with all that noise, just like a thunderstorm in Westfield.

Another night I'll not forget was a ride from 4 P. M. to 5 A. M. in a motor truck; eighteen men, with equipment, all cramped in, and rain outside, everybody smoking and singing. It got cold later, so we lighted up some candles, closed up the canvas back of the truck and sat there, eating what was left of our bread and salmon. We have come to the stage where we are apt to be ahead of the kitchen, and have to cook up stuff in our own mess kits.

Army life in campaign is a rough affair. Just now we are in among some recently captured Boche trenches, not living in them, however. The dead have not all been buried and you come across some gruesome sights.

The morale of our bunch is fine. Last night we lined up on the road, while some troops marched by who had just seen some fighting. They were certainly full of the winning stuff, and said the only trouble was they couldn't run as fast as the Germans. The crowd of course thinks we are going to take Metz right away. No matter what happens, the American victory has electrified every U. S. soldier in France.

[To C. R. C., who enlisted and was in an Officers' Training Camp.]

Sept. 17, 1918.

Can't tell you how glad I was to get your letter written from Petersburg. You certainly are there, and I'll hand it to you. I wish I had tried harder to get into one of those O. T. S. before I was finally taken, but I took it for granted that when they said "No more outsiders", it meant just that. . . . . As for myself, it begins to look as though I would go through with O. D. buttons. Believe me, Nick, with Coey's life before me, I can willingly go through driving a water-cart. . . . . One of the hardest things about this is to know how those at home worry. Coey's death is something we will never get over. He had the real stuff. The doctor that was with him near the end said he asked him to write home that he was happy to die for France. I would give anything if they could be spared any further suffering on account of me.

We have just been through our first shell fire, not without a few casualties. You hear the shell coming and drop on your face and just wait for the next few trying seconds. Honest, Nick, it is the hell they say it is. We were under fire coming out of a woods; and, crossing an open field, I must have flopped at least fifteen times. Take good care of your gas mask. The Hun mixes up his shells, so that you are liable to be caught napping, as we were. . . . . I'm in a trench now, with some straw in the bottom, and tar paper over the top. . . . . With it all I am feeling first rate and taking what comes.

[To G. L. A., who enlisted in the Canadian army.]

Sept. 17, 1918.

I certainly appreciated what you said about poor old Coey. . . . . It certainly is as you say. For all who

knew him his life will always be an inspiration; and for us in the war all the more so. I am glad to be the one in our family to carry on his work.

I understand from Carolus that you have been shifted to the Tanks. . . . . Go to it, Mum, old boy! I hope you get your commission out of it as well. Be sure and learn how to get one of those babies out of the mud. I recently saw a whole herd of them stuck alongside of the road. I guess the dope on tanks is to keep them moving; when they stop going forward they seem to start going downward. . . . . .

You can read all your life about war, and shells, and hardships, but one doesn't understand it until he has lived it through. Our company is standing up firm, too. We are ready to go anywhere we are sent, and that willingly. Let me hear from you, old-timer, when you have time. You must appreciate how letters bind you to home and the old happy life.

[*Bois des Grands Portions*] *Sept. 28, 1918.*

Since my last writing we have been in action; just now we are resting up. You realize what has been going on more afterwards than at the time. I feel the strain now, and I guess every man in the company feels the same. All I'll say is that it is a terrible business. I know now what Coey went through both with his automobile and especially with his battery. It is hard to appreciate the strain of being under shell fire without having experienced it. I feel as if I would rather be in front of all the bullets and bayonets of the German army than under concentrated shell fire. I have a wholesome respect for artillery fire.

We moved up at night of course and started to dig in, each man digging a trench deep enough to make him level with the ground. There were troops of ours ahead of us, but we were constantly under observation. No trench system and cut and dried trench warfare;

this sector is all open fighting, and where we were even the enemy line had not been definitely located. That night I shivered in my slicker, hoping that it wouldn't rain. The next day I covered my dugout with some corrugated iron, and while it rained I lit my old pipe and read "The Strange Tale of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" Brabe sent me. It is certainly a relief to have something to read under such circumstances. One afternoon we started to dig a trench near by our position, and were shelled on our way home; men all around me were gassed enough to knock them out, but I got through it, losing a pair of glasses in putting on my gas mask. When we got to our hill the Boche started to send over high explosive.

One ten-inch shell I saw explode among a group not far from me and knock out two men. I will admit freely I was scared. After some of the confusion had died down and the shelling had nearly stopped, there was a call for stretcher bearers. I jumped at the chance of doing something and helped out. Some of the others who helped told me they felt the same way. It is harder to wait around, under conditions like that, than anything else. If you can only get something to take your mind off your own puny skin you can go through a lot more.

After a week on the hill we went forward into the real first line, with barbed wire in front, but again nothing elaborate. It is characteristic of what our army will do, that we don't spend any too much time on trench systems around here, because we expect to go ahead and keep going. I was the company signalman, but all communication was by runner, so they didn't use me at all. I was fortunate to have been in a dugout near the captain, but that particular spot was incessantly shelled, and we had to keep down and keep our ears open if we did go out.

It wasn't pleasant living either, with no water for four days, and two meals a day, sometimes one, and once none at all. I feel fine now, however, with all those letters from home, a new jacket on my back and the news about Austria-Hungary. Cheer up; love to all.

Sept. 30, 1918.

I have just been through the most strenuous two weeks of my life and may go up to the front again soon. [This refers to the same experience and time as in letter of Sept. 28. This written to E. G. C.] It's an awful strain, and I was pretty well all in when we got back a ways out of range. When I think how long Coey was in similar positions and how little he really said of that side of it, I know he had courage.

I haven't seen a Boche yet, except dead ones, and haven't gone over the top, but I'll take a chance on going over any day in the week rather than lie in an open trench and listen to high explosive shells bursting around you. That waiting is a terrible game. . . . . One night we thought the Boche was coming over, so we stood to all night, armed to the teeth; it was a relief to think of fighting men and bullets rather than dodging shells.

Oct. 14, 1918 [*near Varennes*].

We are all excited over the peace news, and although we are very near the line we wonder if we will go in again. . . . . Everybody wants it so much on the right basis, it is hard to believe it near. . . . . .

For the past two weeks we have been hiking and living in the woods.* The hikes are heart-breakers, as we now carry overcoats. I wouldn't give it up for anything, however. I can't get my shoulders used to a six-hour drag with a 60-odd-pound load. Were it not for ten-minute rests every hour I couldn't keep up. Have never had foot trouble outside of an occasional blister. . . . . .

I am down to hard pan on what to carry; no changes of anything but socks, and I wear both of them; one blanket, and slicker, and overcoat. We are independent of transports for anything but food and ammunition. If you need anything real badly you can generally salvage it almost anywhere. The woods in the American sector near the lines are full of everything in the way of equipment and ammunition. After the war all one would need in France to make a fortune is a junk wagon. . . . . Have never received any of the eatables you all have sent, but thanks just the same.

Oct. 14, 1918.

A few days ago our regiment was encamped in the woods about ten miles from the fighting, and it was about noontime. We were lying around campfires, cleaning mess kits, guns, ammunition, shaving, and lying around in general. All of a sudden down the path came a real American girl with two other ladies with black slickers and big waterproof vizors. They certainly looked good to me. The whole regiment stared them out of countenance all the way down the line. We see American women workers from time to time, and they look good; but to see an actual girl, in real civilian dress, and just a bit of a self-conscious smile to show she is not in the game, but only on a visit; it's like hot coffee after an eight-hour hike.

[Philip E. Damon, a sergeant in the 23rd Engineers, of Boone, Iowa, while walking over the battlefield of Grand-Pré, some three weeks after Salter's death, noticed a haversack, with helmet, rifle and gas mask near-by, indicating the spot where a soldier had fallen.

*In another letter he says: We have dragged through town after town, in the pitch dark, when every ray of light, through a dawn blind, made me think of "Excelsior," only to emerge on the other side into the open country again.

Upon the haversack lay the letter of Oct. 14, 1918, from which the above extract is taken. It was addressed to Miss Virginia Merrill, and all ready to mail. A letter to Salter from his mother also lay there. Searching in the little near-by cemetery, Sergt. Damon found Salter's new-made grave. Later, touched by the two letters, and all the circumstances, he sent this letter to Miss Merrill, with a sketch of the locality, and an appreciative letter of his own.]

HIS LAST LETTER.

Oct. 18, 1918 [*Near Grand-Pré*].

I am enclosing a slip to put on a Christmas package such as we sent to Carolus last year. Send some hard candy and one or two handkerchiefs. Haven't time to write much more, as the mail is going out. We hope the war will be over soon—if the Boche is sincere in the peace offers he makes. Love to all. SAULLIE.

On Oct. 15th the 78th Division relieved the 77th in the lines, the 1st Battalion of the 311th Regiment being placed in support at La Folie Ferme, and encountering a hostile barrage in taking over the position. This is probably the place where he wrote his last letter, for on the night of the 18th the 1st Battalion went into the front line near the Aire river, where they received orders to attack the next morning. This they did at 3 A. M., Oct. 19th, Salter acting as signalman, ahead of the troops. The attack was over an open, level field perhaps a mile in width, and directed against certain wooded heights, near the Ferme des Graves [*Bellejujeun?*].

Salter had come within 200 yards of a peach orchard on the slope, when they met with terrific machine gun fire, and he was killed by a shot in the temple, about

5 A. M., dying instantly. One of his companions in Co. A saw him later that day with a bunch of rockets still in his hand as he lay, and a smile on his face. He went over the top but once.

The attack of the 19th failed at this point, and it was not until Nov. 1st that the Americans came into possession of this large field, "grand pré." The winning of the heights beyond was the opening of the gateway to Sedan.

VI

Addenda

Private Salter Storrs Clark, Jr., Co. A, 311th Infantry, was killed in action on the morning of Oct. 19, 1918, during an attack on the German lines just east of Grand-Pré. The attack was launched at 3 A. M., several hours before daybreak. In the uncertain light it was impossible for us clearly to distinguish our objective, which was the Bellejujeun farm, on the hill just north of Grand-Pré. Lieut. Gibbons and his headquarters group, to which Pvt. Clark as a signalman belonged, were in the lead, investigating the ground and obstacles that lay ahead of the troops. At the break of day we met terrific resistance from machine gun fire from the hills beyond, and Private Clark, along with other men from his company, was killed. . . . .

I would like, as an officer of his company, to express my sincere admiration for his character and my regret at his death. I am sure that, under the trying conditions of war, not only in battle, but also in the more commonplace, but equally fatiguing duties of the march and camp, no one ever saw in Private Clark anything but a brave soldier and cheerful, intelligent, clean-minded man.

HARRY F. BIGLER,
1st Lieut. Co. A, 311th Inf.

It is this same wonderful spirit that drew us to him at the beginning, and it never left him. That's the big thing that I cannot express, but it will never leave me. Salter died a hero, and lived a hero.

HARRY S. PARKER,
Co. A, 311th Regt.

It was on this date that Salter, Morton, and numerous others were killed, although I believe they were officially reported as killed on Nov. 1, 1918. I went over the top with the boys on that sad occasion, and while most of the fellows who were with me were killed, I happened to be one of the lucky ones, and was able to crawl back to our own lines after having been surrounded for five days and six nights. Both Salter and Morton were killed by machine gun fire. Salter was killed instantly, and died with a smile on his face.

I shall remember Salter as one of the best and most confidential friends I ever had. We slept together, soldiered together, went over the top together, and I talked with him less than five minutes before his death. If he had been my brother I would not have felt his death more keenly, and I am honored to say that no better or more courageous soldier ever tramped the battlefields of France.

While walking along the road one night, weary, cold and hungry, I became rather disgusted and felt morose. He tried to cheer me up, and said that while he was as sick as myself, he had come to the conclusion that it didn't make so much difference when a man died, as how he died, and that he knew of no other cause more noble or more worthy to die for.

HERBERT C. RANDOLPH,
Co. A, 311th Regt.

A gentleman to the very last letter.

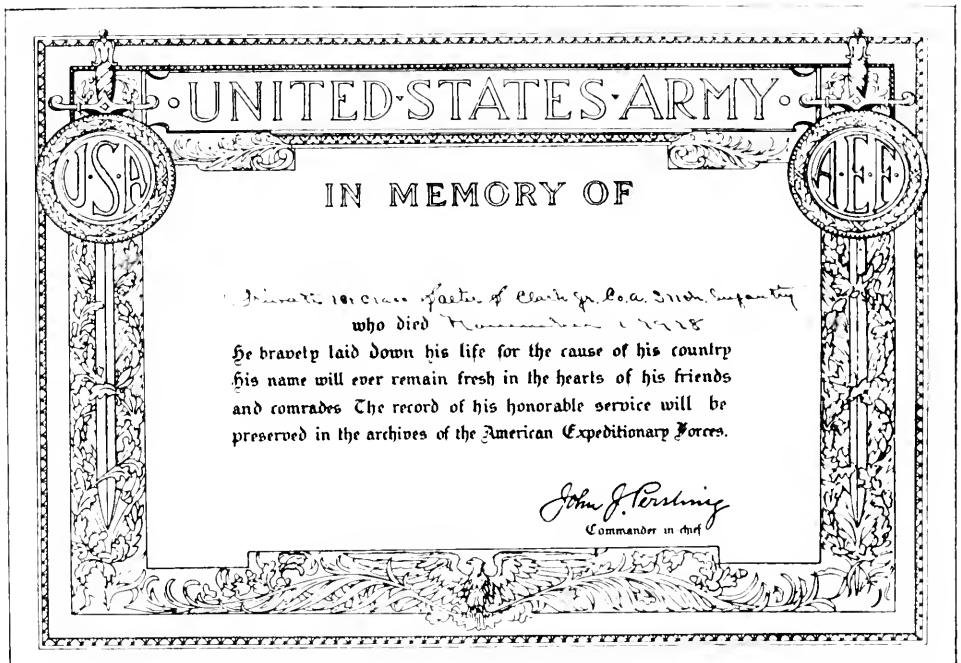
JAMES T. GROFF,
Co. A, 311th Regt.

In his death all who knew him have made a great sacrifice for humanity and democracy.

ROBERT MALCOLM MARSH.

He had one of the best minds I ever knew. I always liked to see him look up through his glasses when he was amused at something.

PROF. HOLLON A. FARR.



UNITED STATES ARMY

U.S.A. A.E.F.

IN MEMORY OF

Private 1st Class Walter S. Clark Jr. Co. A. 311th Infantry

who died November 1 1918

He bravely laid down his life for the cause of his country His name will ever remain fresh in the hearts of his friends and comrades The record of his honorable service will be preserved in the archives of the American Expeditionary Forces.

John J. Pershing

Commander in chief

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